

"Whilst it would be untrue to say that the happiest hours of my life have been spent in broadcasting, it has been pleasant all the same ; and I should like to think that some of it has served a useful purpose. Thirteen minutes is not, very long to deal with any subject, and that is the time in which I had recently to talk about each of a dozen figures whose careers were significant in the march of human freedom. I do not pretend that the list of names is in any sense complete, or that my comments are more than passing thoughts suggested by these great figures. Nothing can be more disastrous than the attempt to compress a full biography into thirteen minutes, and I have not made it. But as these talks were only heard in Asia, Africa, and America, I felt that perhaps they might be read in Europe.

Two names have been added to my list of a dozen Liberators from Cromwell to Lenin, because I felt that Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill will leave the world a good deal freer than they found it two years ago."

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# THE LIBERATORS

*A Black Jacket Première*



PHILIP GUEDALLA

# THE LIBERATORS

WITH PORTRAITS BY

F. J. KORMIS



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## LETTER TO A LISTENER

MY DEAR LISTENER,

The difficulty was that I never knew if you were listening. That is the trouble about all broadcasting. The speaker squares his chest and fills his lungs and then lets fly in perfect ignorance as to whether there is anybody at the other end. Personally, I rather doubted if there was, because I had started to make speeches a good many years before the B.B.C. was thought of, and I got my training in a rougher school than the genteel surroundings of Broadcasting House. In those days if you said something funny, you got a laugh; and if you managed to say something worth listening to, you could tell from the attentive silence of a real audience that they were listening. But the awful vacuum in which a broadcast is delivered has a slightly paralysing quality. If you have never made a speech before (and many masters of the microphone sound very much as if they were in that virgin state), it does not greatly matter. You will not feel that there is something missing, when they leave you in an empty room, turn on a red light, and ask you to believe that large numbers of your fellow-creatures are really listening. But if you have some previous experience of public speaking, you are apt to feel a little lonely in that electric silence; and you will be quite surprised when total strangers, by whom your soliloquy appears to have been overheard, write



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letters bearing foreign postage-stamps to tell you just where you have got it wrong. After that you may begin to believe your soft-footed keepers at Broadcasting House, when they assure you that your talks are really being heard in Africa and the Americas and such parts of Asia as are not too busy with their own affairs. Those were the destinations of the talks I have collected here, though even now I am not quite clear if anybody heard them.

Perhaps that uncertainty is partly due to a harrowing experience in 1940, when I was broadcasting one evening at the very moment when the House of Commons was making up its mind whether it wanted Mr. Neville Chamberlain to go on being Prime Minister. (Most of us, as you recall, had hated the idea for years; but a Parliament, of which the large majority had been elected seven years ago to support Mr. Baldwin, was slow to change its habits.) Some time before I started an announcer told the waiting world that voting had begun and that the programme would be interrupted to tell them the result. This, I thought, was fine. Entire communities would have to listen, whilst I said my piece, in case they missed the news from Westminster. But just as I was starting to address the biggest audience that I am ever likely to command, the figures were announced and the whole English-speaking race switched off, leaving the world to darkness and to me.

An experience of that kind marks a man. But things are always apt to happen when you broadcast. There was the day when an enterprising radio interviewer at Buffalo, N.Y., showed by his increasing

## LETTER TO A LISTENER

pallor that he was running out of questions before the allotted time was up, and our lives were only saved by a resourceful friend who crawled across the studio on all-fours to hand him strips of paper bearing searching interrogatories that enabled me to swim to safety. Nor should we omit the French-Canadian announcer at Ottawa, who startled me with his French announcement just as I was set to go after his English-speaking colleague's introduction; and the midnight at Broadcasting House when intruding German aircraft made them change my studio two minutes before we were due to start, and a race up endless stairs was found to be a poor aid to elocution; and those interminable sessions in the blitz of 1940, conducted for some insane reason in the chapel of Broadcasting House, where the golden stars on a blue ceiling were an unpleasant intimation of mortality which somehow failed to harmonize with the disturbing noises of the outer world.

Whilst it would be untrue to say that the happiest hours of my life have been spent in broadcasting, it has been pleasant all the same; and I should like to think that some of it has served a useful purpose. Thirteen minutes is not very long to deal with any subject, and that is the time in which I had recently to talk about each of a dozen figures whose careers were significant in the march of human freedom. I do not pretend that the list of names is in any sense complete, or that my comments are more than passing thoughts suggested by these great figures. Nothing can be more disastrous than the attempt to compress a full biography into thirteen minutes, and I have not made it. But as these talks

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1942

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## C R O M W E L L

JUST three hundred years ago, in the latter part of 1642, a charge of heavy cavalry lumbered across some ploughed fields in the English midlands; and a red-faced gentleman, who had not very much to do that day, looked on. He was a Member of Parliament; he was just forty-three; and he was watching the battle of Edgehill. It was the first battle he had ever seen, and it was the first time he had appeared in arms against his King. Both were fairly dangerous occupations, and he seemed a little old to learn. But as he could see no reasonable alternative, he went into it with praiseworthy thoroughness, and in a few years he had made himself into a great cavalry commander and led his country through the English Revolution.

On the military side there might be a good deal to say about his knack of using a great mass of mounted men in rapid motion to break the enemy's resistance. Every age has its own shock tactics; and before the caterpillar tractor and the internal combustion engine were combined into something more destructive, Cromwell's Ironsides had all the dash and power of a tank attack. But his tactics are the least memorable thing about him, because his real achievement was the English Revolution.

The world we live in, the free world that is fighting for its life, is largely the result of its successful revolutions; and their names are written on its



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monuments. Lenin's tomb in the Red Square at Moscow, Washington's grave at Mount Vernon, the Place de la Bastille (unless its name has been changed to the Gestapoplatz) are the shrines of the Russian, American, and French Revolutions, which mark the long ascent to freedom. But one revolution is often overlooked. It was so long ago that its revolutionary principles have passed into acceptance and become respectable. Yet their explosive power was the real driving-force behind most of the revolutions that came after it.

No revolution starts from scratch. The Russian Revolution honoured the name of the Paris Commune; the *Communards* dressed up as Jacobins of 1793; the thought behind the French Revolution and its predecessor in America came straight from Cromwell's England. There is an honourable pedigree of revolutions, and the English Revolution was the father of them all. For half a century after it nervous foreigners stared apprehensively at Englishmen abroad as dangerous Bolsheviks, who had put themselves beyond the pale and cut off their King's head and set up a republic; and the Continent was quite right to be suspicious, because in a few generations the infection spread and France did precisely the same thing.

Not that the English Revolution sprang fully-armed from anybody's head. It was born, like any other revolution, from something that had gone before. A bend in the great stream of history had set free the mind of man in the Renaissance. Once his mind was free, the inevitable happened and he began to call his soul his own. That brought on the

Reformation. The most eloquent of its historians, James Froude, has called the Reformation "the hinge on which all modern history turns"; and as the gate swung open, the figure of an English gentleman strode through it towards freedom in "a plain cloth suit which seemed to be made by an ill country tailor; his linen was plain and not very clean; and I remember a speck of blood or two upon his little band, which was not larger than his collar. His hat was without a hat-band. His stature was of good size; his sword stuck close to his side; his countenance swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour". But he was unmistakably a gentleman. That is, in some ways, the most interesting thing about the English Revolution. For the chief revolutionary was an English gentleman.

There was no mistake about it. He took a pride in what he was, and he knew its value. He had a clear idea of what the Parliamentary forces were up against in challenging their betters; and he warned somebody that as they would have to meet "gentlemen who have honour and courage and resolution in them", they must find "men of a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go". Not that he was a snob. He once paid a ten-pound fine in order to escape a knighthood; and there was no hint of snobbery about his classical prescription for a good officer—"I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than that which you call a gentleman and nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed."

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Men of that quality are nothing if not independent. The Reformation had shown them how to call their souls their own; and if they were denied their other liberties, they stayed at home and fought it out, or they went overseas to the new countries where there would not be anybody to deny them. Cromwell himself was on the point of emigrating to America sixteen years after the sailing of the *Mayflower*; and once, when the King's victory in Parliament seemed possible, he said to somebody: "I would have sold all I had the next morning, and never have seen England any more." If he had sailed for Boston, Cromwell would have been quite at home in New England, flat-footed opinions, deep sincerity and all. New England at its best has something Cromwellian about it; and there was a quality in Cromwell which we sometimes recognize as American.

He had a touch of Lincoln's melancholy when he was young, and more than a touch of Lincoln's inability to dress like a dapper little gentleman. There is a good deal in common between the slouching figure in a loose frockcoat and lamentable stove-pipe hat and the squire from Huntingdon, who wore clothes "made by an ill country tailor" and indulged in the unpardonable inelegance of a red flannel muffler on Sundays. Somebody once asked John Hampden who he was. "That sloven," he replied, "whom you see before you, hath no ornament in his speech; that sloven, I say, if we should come to a breach with the king (which God forbid), in such a case, I say, that sloven will be the greatest man in England."

## CROMWELL

Men of that order are capable of living through the anguish of a Civil War, because they have discerned the supreme value of those things for which a cruel price has sometimes to be paid. Perhaps Cromwell had a clearer vision of what he was fighting against than of what he was fighting for. He once said to somebody, "I can tell you, sir, what I would not have, though I cannot, what I would." That may have been because his thought was cast in the mould of the Old Testament, which often saw the defects of the hosts of Midian more sharply than the beauties of the New Jerusalem. Besides, it is a human weakness. The power of repulsion is by far the strongest force in politics. In any election you will find more voters who have cast their votes against the candidate whom they dislike than in favour of their choice; and the world to-day is a flaming picture of four-fifths of humanity united against something that it has recognized for undiluted evil. The next stage, we may hope, will see them still united in favour of a better order. Cromwell passed through both stages. In the first he could see clearly "what the mind of God may be in all this, and what our duty is. Surely it is not that the poor godly people of this kingdom should still be made the object of wrath and anger, nor that our God would have our necks under a yoke of bondage." That simple sentiment of 1648 can still echo from the South Seas to the Arctic Circle in 1942.

The sayings of such men are durable because, as Cromwell said, "our business is to speak Things". He was less concerned with cloudy visions of a vague

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future than with the simple application of the principles that he believed in to the facts of life. Starting from the great liberation of the soul of man effected in the Reformation, he believed in freedom. That was why he had been prepared to sail across the Atlantic if the King succeeded in destroying freedom by a vote in Parliament. That was why a shocked contemporary announced that "Cromwell and his Council took on them to join themselves to no party, but to be for the liberty of all". He told Parliament that "he that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he fights for". A later definition told precisely what that was: "Only we could wish that every good citizen and every man that walks peacefully in a blameless conversation, may have liberties and encouragements, it being according to the just policy of all States, even to justice itself." It is not easy to conceive an ideal that is further from the drilled uniformity of modern slave states.

There cannot be much doubt on which side of the conflict Cromwell stands to-day. He had not many certainties; but one of them was freedom—freedom of action and freedom of belief. "In things of the mind we look for no compulsion, but that of light and reason." There is a sentiment discarded long ago by the tribal terrorists of Continental Europe.

Not all of his contemporaries were equally broad-minded. But Cromwell laid it down that "the State in choosing men to serve it takes no notice of their opinions. If they be willing faithfully to serve

## CROMWELL

it—that satisfies. Take heed of being sharp, or too easily sharpened by others, against those to whom you can object little but that they square not with you in every opinion concerning matters of religion.” The man who pleaded with the Scots divines—“I beseech you in the bowels of Christ think it possible that you may be mistaken”—could hardly be intolerant; and the circle of his toleration was more widely drawn than the area of Christendom itself, since the Lord Protector re-admitted Jews to England. So the russet-coated captain of his dreams was not very like a Brown-shirt after all.

But he was very English. The great Republican was not ashamed to speak of “Queen Elizabeth of famous memory”. The squire of Huntingdon could see “that which was and is the strength of this Nation—the Shipping”. And his last Parliament was favoured with a vision of British strategy that still holds all its value: “You have accounted yourselves happy in being environed with a great Ditch from all the world beside. Truly you will not be able to keep your Ditch, nor your Shipping—unless you turn your Ships and Shipping into Troops of Horse and Companies of Foot; and fight to defend yourselves on *terra firma*.” There is England’s eternal problem in time of war. The noble experiment of the English Republic has passed away. But Englishmen still hold to freedom. The Ditch flows round the island still; and Cromwell’s Ironsides man the ramparts, sail the seas, and ride the skies.

THERE was a mournful individual who said that life would be endurable, if it were not for its amusements. People sometimes try to make it so much more cheerful than it is that the attempt is apt to end in disaster, in the unutterable woe that surges over nine ordinary people out of ten when their fellow-creatures put on paper caps and assume a lively air to order. It is never wise to improve on nature; and the same principle applies to discussion. If things are not clear to start with, no amount of explanation will ever make them so. When people know what you are talking about, it is quite safe to talk about it, and they will understand. But if you have to start with a definition, the whole thing is a waste of time.

There is a vast amount of talk to-day about freedom. That is quite natural, because we happen to be half-way through a war for freedom. But when well-meaning people start to tell us what it is and to produce clever definitions of it, the normal mind refuses, quietly but firmly, to take it in. Of course we know what freedom is without defining it, just as anybody knows a heap when he sees one, but is quite incapable of finding words to fix the exact point at which a little dust on the floor becomes a heap. When we see it there, we recognize it; and it is just the same with freedom. Or rather, it is just the opposite, because freedom is rather like the air

we breathe—one of the things we value just when we are starting to run short of it.

All that is true of our own freedom; and that is about the only kind of freedom that most of us ever think of, although we talk a lot about other people's. But freedom for the other fellow was not what brought Frenchmen to the barricades in the French Revolution. It was freedom for themselves. Freedom for the other fellow was not what Russians fought for in the street-fighting of the Russian Revolution. It was freedom for themselves. But Paris and Petrograd are not the only places in the world where men have fought for freedom. There have been English-speaking revolutions—one or two in Britain, and one in America—and their legacy has been a firm belief in freedom for the other fellow. Its other name is toleration.

Toleration is not so easy as it sounds. If you believe with all your heart that what *you* believe is true and that anybody who does not believe it is a danger to the state and most likely damned to all eternity, it is not easy to let him go on believing it. In order to do that, you must admit that yours is not the only way and that other people have a perfect right to follow theirs. That represents a big advance on single-track fanaticism; and as long as people get no further than their own beliefs, they can never make it. When men are selfishly intent on saving their own souls, they have not much time to spare for anybody else's. James Froude once said that "as long as they were deeply in earnest they were not tolerant". But it was the glory of the English Revolution that it produced men



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deeply in earnest, who managed to find room for other people's earnestness. Their own beliefs were undiminished; but they had advanced a step farther on the road to freedom and included a belief in freedom for the other fellow.

When the history of freedom is written, that will be the second chapter; and very nearly all the names in it are English. That might be because they are more easygoing than other people, or because they have other things to think about. But it is certainly the reason why they have been able to combine all sorts of people in a common loyalty to a single Crown. The narrow uniformity which compels obedience to one Church, one Folk, one Reich, one Führer, may produce a noble sect, or drill a formidable tribe; but it will never build an empire. It would have surprised the Puritans to be called empire-builders. But I believe one facet of the light they showed the world helped powerfully in their people's overseas expansion. Some of them, at least, believed in freedom for the other fellow; and that belief has grown into a silken bond of union that stretches half-way round the world and will never part under the Jap sword or the German axe.

It is all summed up in one career. William Penn was a parable of the whole process. Not that England can claim all the credit, since his mother came from Holland; and (as the Germans are finding out) the Dutch have a tenacious, and perhaps an older, tradition of freedom. Dutchmen were facing Alva's infantry, Dutchmen stood out against a foreign conqueror for the sake of their own country and their own consciences before the Armada ever sailed

from Spain. Penn came in for his share of both elements—from his Dutch mother and a father who was one of Cromwell's admirals, old Sir William Penn who took Jamaica from the Spaniards. But the strongest element of all in him was the Quaker influence. Before he had left Oxford, he was in revolt against religious uniformity; and at twenty-three he was in trouble with the magistrates for helping to throw a noisy soldier out of a Quaker meeting. He was soon writing hard, and preaching harder still, in defence of his own right to liberty of conscience. That was a fairly perilous pursuit in the reign of Charles II, when men thought the tide had turned after the English Revolution; and Penn spent his time in and out of prison. But a good many people got as far as that. They believed in freedom for themselves without observing that if they were free, the logical corollary was freedom for the other fellow.

Toleration is never popular. But Quakers are not particularly interested in popularity; and Penn's *Great Case of Liberty of Conscience*, which he published before he was thirty, was a noble argument for complete toleration. That seemed a rather distant prospect for most Europeans in the 1670's, with Louis XIV setting himself to the same task that had defeated Philip II a hundred years before. Great military powers are always tempted to become the world's drill-sergeants and to extend their drill from the parade-ground to the private conscience. If only everyone believed the same thing, how much better they would keep in step, and how much happier a sergeant's life would be. That is why

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persecution almost invariably follows in the wake of foreign conquest; and there seemed every prospect that the French, with Charles II as an unreliable confederate, would succeed in doing what Spain had failed to do. The air of Europe was growing harder for free men to breathe; and they began to look, as people of their sort had looked for a generation now, beyond the ocean. King Louis could not follow them across the Atlantic, and King Charles would not be quite so near; and it was quite natural for Quaker merchants to make large purchases of land in the New World.

That was how Penn came to own a great holding in New Jersey; and the constitution which he drafted for West Jersey flavoured what it termed "the primitive, ancient and fundamental laws of the nation of England" with a strong element of popular control and the new principle of complete religious freedom. The process of emancipation had advanced; and having achieved their own freedom, "the Proprietors, Freeholders and Inhabitants of West Jersey in America" were resolved to confer freedom on the other fellow. Whatever happened on the Continent, men would be free to call their souls their own at Burlington, New Jersey. It was, perhaps, the noblest import ever sent from Europe to America.

The march of freedom went with longer strides across the ocean. There was more room in new, half-empty countries for the strange experiment of toleration; and Penn was fascinated by the vast laboratory of America. At home he seemed to fight a rearguard action against the oncoming forces of

## PENN

reaction. He was still pleading hard for pure tolerance and protesting against compulsory belief in things that were better left matters of opinion. But he was drawn increasingly toward the West, towards an open door through which King Charles's subjects might pass into open country, leaving three thousand miles of water between their consciences and his bishops. The result stands in the American Union to-day as Pennsylvania—named not for William Penn, but for his father, the old English admiral. The sailor had once lent his King a sum of £16,000, and the Crown repaid it handsomely to his son with "a tract of land in America north of Maryland, bounded on the east by the Delaware, on the west limited as Maryland, northward as far as plantable".

The new proprietor wished to call his territory "Sylvania". But when King Charles added the name of Penn in honour of the admiral whose debt he was repaying, not of the Quaker who received the grant, there was nothing to be done. Penn fought hard against perpetuating his father's name or his own. But the King had his way, and Pennsylvania remains Penn's monument.

Here again he planned a commonwealth of freedom—freedom for the other fellow, with absolute religious liberty and fair treatment for the Indians. That was a bold revolution for the year 1682; and Pennsylvania soon became a strange mosaic of Welsh Quakers, German Lutherans, Moravians, and Ulster Presbyterians. For the other fellow could be free enough in Pennsylvania. Penn still worked hard to make him free at home; and, with

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James II on the throne, he acquiesced in the same freedom for Catholics for which he had often fought on behalf of those who disagreed with them. That was an awkward line to take in an excited age, and the great Quaker was promptly called a Jesuit for his pains. But he knew freedom when he saw it, worked for it at home, and left a commonwealth across the ocean where men of all faiths rubbed shoulders in the streets of Philadelphia under the "Great Law of Pennsylvania". There is not much need to define freedom, when men like William Penn show it in action.

### III

## BURKE

WHEN you make a speech and no one listens, there is one consolation. It has happened long ago to better men than you. It happened to Disraeli; but there was some excuse, because the speech was not particularly good and, when he made it, he was wearing a canary-coloured waistcoat and trousers of a cheerful bottle-green. And it happened frequently to Edmund Burke. When the House of Commons saw that Mr. Burke was up, they knew that he was likely to be on his legs for a considerable time and left the Chamber. That was why they used to call him "the dinner-bell"; and when Burke had caught the Speaker's eye, they were fairly safe in ordering a four-course dinner. But the strange thing about it is that his speeches were magnificent. I sometimes wonder whether they were too magnificent, whether Burke went a little further than the simplicity of the spoken word and reached a quality so rich as to be grand to read, but very hard to listen to. They read them afterwards, and we read them still. They wanted to find out what Burke had said; and so do we, because Burke's writing is a noble chapter in the English fight for freedom.

It has been a long battle; and the English fought it before other people had a chance of joining in. (They did the same a year or two ago, when the British peoples kept a fight for freedom going until

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the rest of the free nations of the earth could take a hand.) It started with the men of 1649, who made the English Revolution while the rest of Europe just looked on. It went on with the men of 1688, who made sure that England would be governed by a Parliament and not by a king. No one across the sea seemed particularly interested. France went on doing what King Louis told it to, and the colonists in America had other things to think about. But through the Eighteenth Century there were a few men in England who kept the flag of freedom flying. Indeed, anyone who looked at London in the 1770's and watched the rising tumult, with cross-eyed Mr. Wilkes presiding over roaring meetings in Westminster and the sailors and the sawyers in revolt, would have concluded that the mob was likely to set fire to the Tower of London long before anyone in Paris plucked up courage to storm the Bastille. They maintained the revolutionary tradition. But before they made another English Revolution, the leaven worked abroad. Americans denied the right of authorities three thousand miles away by sailing-ship to govern them, when they were fit to rule themselves. That made the American Revolution. And Frenchmen decided that they were quite fit for self-government as well. That feeling swelled into the French Revolution. But neither of them might have happened quite as they did, unless the free tradition had been kept going in the British Isles. That is the debt that half the world owes to those subjects of King George who went on thinking for themselves; and one of them was Edmund Burke.

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He was an Irishman. He was both sorts of Irishman. His father was a Protestant attorney, and his mother was a Catholic. He had a Quaker schoolmaster for good measure; and there you have the elements that went to the making of a man who was to speak powerfully on the side of freedom. Not that Burke was always on the side of freedom. When he met his first revolution, he was forty-five and met it with open arms in speeches that are still a textbook of constitutional liberty. But when he met his second, he was sixty and turned shuddering away.

That is Burke's strange record. He was, after Lord Chatham, the wisest and most sympathetic interpreter of the American Revolution on this side of the Atlantic. But when the French Revolution came along, he glared at it without the faintest understanding of what it was all about and stretched the English language to its utmost limit in denunciations that were almost shrill. A queer contradiction, which his followers have done their best to explain away. There is an explanation, though. Surely a man may be excused for liking one revolution better than another. (Some never manage to like any.) I do not mean merely because most people's taste for revolutions is apt to dwindle as they get on in years, but simply because he understood one revolution better than the other. There was a good reason for that, as the first revolution in his life—the revolution in America—spoke English. By the time that it arrived, our little Irishman had grown into an English Whig; he had been private secretary to a Whig Prime Minister; and the American Revolution was, in its essence, a



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very Whig affair. It talked his language; it was a high-principled rebellion, founded on equity and quotations from Blackstone's Commentaries. Any English Whig with half an eye could understand it; and Burke understood it in a very English way. He could not have told you very much about its underlying theory. It did not have much underlying theory, anyway; that was mostly put in afterwards by other people, who came along when it was over. He saw it simply as a practical dispute between Englishmen on both sides of the Atlantic over a question of taxation. "Show the thing you contend for to be reason," he said, "show it to be common sense; show it to be the means of attaining some useful end." He was not greatly interested in abstract rights—"The question with me is not whether you have a right to render your people miserable, but whether it is not your interest to make them happy." The niceties of constitutional law were the last things Burke cared about—"Leave America, if she has taxable matter in her, to tax herself. I am not here going into the distinctions of rights nor attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions; I hate the very sound of them." The British mind—and Burke's mind was very British—closes like an oyster, when a theory appears in sight. He was not prepared to talk about the theory; though if he had to, he seemed to have a hazy notion that there was a right to tax the Colonies. But he was quite clear that there was no practical excuse for using it. That was all that mattered; and if the Colonies resisted, he was on

their side. There was no way of going to law with all of them, because he could not see "the method of drawing up an indictment against an whole people"; he was scornful on the subject of "so paltry a sum as threepence in the eyes of a financier, so insignificant an article as tea in the eyes of a philosopher"; and when he moved the resolutions for conciliation with the Colonies, he waved aside all technicalities—"your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances". All that he could see was a plain choice between two lines of action; and he had not the slightest doubt which one he chose. Unhappily King George, who cared more for theory than for practice, chose the other. But nobody has ever doubted that Burke's choice was right.

His attitude to the whole problem, his firm refusal to think about the deeper issues, and his determination to do the thing that seemed to work were highly British. It is the reason why our institutions, which are often quite illogical, operate in perfect freedom, while the delicately balanced constitutions of more gifted people overseas are often out of order. Burke's long service with the Whig nobility had made an Englishman of him in many ways. You would never have supposed that the man who wrote the great panegyric on the proud Keep of Windsor, "rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval towers", was born in Dublin. But Burke had ceased by then to be much of an Irishman.

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That, perhaps, was why the French Revolution found his blind spot. He was older now; he had seen the French monarchy at Versailles in its lovely autumn; and he simply failed to see the point of all the trouble on the Continent. It did not speak his language. Although its antecedents drew much of their inspiration from the same English sources as he drank at, and though its impetus came largely from the very revolution in America that he had backed, its utterances jarred on his ears as a largely meaningless uproar. Its leaders struck him as little more than "half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern", or "a college of armed fanatics for the propagation of the principles of assassination, robbery, rebellion, fraud, faction, oppression and impiety". The result of this indiscriminating disapproval was some of the most coloured prose in our language; but if that were all that Burke produced, his name would live only as a stylist's.

His real achievement, literature and home politics apart, was that he saw the revolution in America and was not afraid to greet it; that his cool view of the controversy might have settled it by reason. Most controversies between Englishmen have found that road to settlement; and the fact that such issues have not risen since among the British peoples is largely due to the plain fact that the lesson of 1776 has been learnt. Not everybody learned it. The Spaniards lost an empire in the next generation, because they failed to draw conclusions from the revolution in America; and so they had another revolution in their own Americas. But the British mind was not so slow. It saw what

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George III had failed to see. It saw that Burke was right. So it relaxed the bonds of empire; and a loose structure stands better in an earthquake than the walls that stand so stiffly till they crack. That is why free men living in the broad shadow of the British Commonwealth can join with Americans in honouring the Irishman who came to London, earned a living by his pen, spoke as he felt, and impressed Dr. Johnson as "never unwilling to begin to talk, or in haste to leave off".



## IV

### JEFFERSON

FREEDOM speaks many languages. I like to think that English is the language she knows best. But English is by no means the only language she can talk; and there were others that she knew long before she ever learned a word of English. I suppose the first she ever spoke was Greek, when free men began to learn their rights in free cities and stood between the Western world and the dull marching masses of the East, and later when they freed their country from the Turk. Freedom is still talking Greek, where a brave people starves in the shadow of its monuments rather than submit and waits its moment. Further to the north she speaks other languages in Balkan valleys; and on the other side of Europe freedom is still talking Dutch, as she has often spoken it before. Freedom has talked Spanish in her day and speaks it still beyond the Atlantic, where free nations order their affairs according to their desire and not according to a distant master's orders. *Libertad* is as good a word as liberty—and as what France used to be allowed to call *Liberté*. For there was once a splendid day when freedom learned to speak in French; and the day will come when freedom will speak French again. Perhaps the only language she has never learnt is German. But that is an omission which she means to remedy; and when she learns a language, she does not forget it.

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She has been speaking English for quite a long time now. But when she talks it, it does not always sound the same. Sometimes she talks it with an English accent, and sometimes as the language of free men is spoken on the other side of the Atlantic. For there is more than one kind of freedom, as you will find that there is more than one kind of English when you listen to free men from London, Montreal, New York, and Sydney talking in a room together. But they mean the same thing, although they say it with different accents. When freedom learned to speak with an American accent, she learned it in a revolution. (That is where she generally learns her languages. It only took her a few months in 1917 to pick up Russian; and she may be relied on to learn German just as quickly.) The lesson lasted; and she learned it largely from a bony man named Jefferson, with sandy hair and clothes that never seemed to fit, who knew a little about everything, and asked multitudes of people to stay with him in the country long after he could not afford to put them up, and once wrote, "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

That was freedom, as it was understood by Thomas Jefferson; and it was Americanism, too. He practised it from one end to the other of a long life; and I am not sure that he did not invent it. For there is a quality in any act or word or piece of writing that came from Jefferson which you will not find in any other of his contemporaries. His flavour is entirely different from the stately Wash-

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ington's, or pawky Dr. Franklin's, or clear-eyed Alexander Hamilton's who told someone, when he was a boy, that he despised "the grovelling condition of a clerk". You will find nothing like them in Jefferson. But you will find something very like his thought stamped all over the United States. For he really was the first American; or would it be more true to say that the United States are largely Jeffersonian? At any rate, the quality which we term Americanism was in a large degree Thomas Jefferson's invention.

That is a big contribution for a single man to make to the growth of human freedom. But beyond doubt he made it. He made it largely because he was not afraid to think for himself, and because his parents gave him a first-rate education to think with. (It is worth remembering to-day, when human intelligence is at war with the disordered dreams of two or three ill-educated men, that it is just as well, in choosing leaders, to choose someone who can read and write.) Jefferson transformed his country very largely with the things that he was taught in William and Mary College, Williamsburg. I do not mean that King George's admirable lecturers taught him to be a republican and an empire-builder (because he grew up to be both). But they helped to form a busy mind, that was never idle until he had brought America nearer to his dreams.

The section of Virginia from which he came was very different from these settled counties where Whig grandees like Washington surveyed an ordered prospect from the porticoes of exquisite



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Colonial mansions. Albemarle County, right under the Blue Ridge, was on the frontier then; and Jefferson's outlook was very largely a frontiersman's. Not his profession, though, because he was a lawyer and a fairly good one, though he had a poor opinion of his trade "to question everything, yield nothing, and talk by the hour". His mind moved more freely than a lawyer's. But there were points in which he was not unlike those around him in the court-houses of Virginia, because he would not have been a Virginian, if he had not been unreasonably fond of horse-flesh—especially on a race-track—and he was recklessly hospitable.

But politics were far more interesting than the Bar; and though he disliked debate, he was an influential member of any assembly for the simple reason that he thought clearly. Besides, he was a brilliant draftsman; and whilst other people made orations, he held the pen. His first resolutions submitted to the Virginia Convention became the basis of the whole movement of the Colonies; and when he later wrote them into the Declaration of Independence, his pen made a deeper mark on history than most men's. His thought was all his own—his, and his education's. There was not yet a French Revolution for young revolutionaries to copy; and Jefferson in his first stage made a purely English-speaking contribution to the history of free government.

He was quite clear about its freedom; and he put his principles into practice in the new constitution of Virginia. The main object was to exclude any form of aristocracy and to found "a government

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truly republican" on complete freedom of conscience and universal education. That was the basis of a new society, of which great things might be expected. When Frenchmen went to work upon the problem shortly afterwards, Jefferson was vastly interested, because he was American Minister in Paris. But they went to work in quite a different way for the simple reason that they were Frenchmen and not Americans. He received the unusual compliment of an invitation to serve on the committee charged with the drafting of a French constitution; and though he could not accept it, his association with events in France has left a notion that Jefferson was intellectually a Frenchman. That is quite untrue. His greatest revolutionary work was done before the French ever had a revolution to their credit; and his subsequent career was a logical continuation of his own beginnings. True, he was not quite so shocked by the French Revolution as some of his contemporaries; and he horrified them, when disorder broke out at home, by observing calmly that "a little revolution now and then is a good thing . . . an observation of this truth should render honest republican governors so mild in their punishment of rebellions as not to discourage them too much. It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government." He even wrote: "God forbid that we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion. . . . The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants." For Jefferson never ceased to be a revolutionary, while so many of his generation decided that one revolution had

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been quite enough and that the next thing to do was to bar the door with an unbending constitution against further change.

But change was in his blood. Change is the first condition of growth, and he believed in growing things. Almost a frontiersman by origin, he was a revolutionary in the White House, when he came there after the stately reigns of Washington and John Adams. His cheerful informality was his own notion of republican simplicity, not an imitation of the French. It was no affectation, but a strong personal belief of the man who wrote, "If it be possible to be certainly conscious of anything, I am conscious of feeling no difference between writing to the highest and lowest being on earth." That is just another facet of Americanism, as he practised it.

But his distaste for war and grandeur did not deny him a grandiose conception of his country's destiny. That was American as well. He was always haunted by the great dream of marching to the West. Twenty years before he launched Lewis and Clark exploring into the wilderness, he was already wondering what lay beyond the Mississippi in the empty lands the Spaniards ruled; and when the great chance came, when an indifferent Emperor in Paris succeeded to the great inheritance and seemed prepared to part with it for a little money, Jefferson was instantly alert. If he could secure the West, he was perfectly aware that "the future destinies of our country hang on the event of this negotiation". He had always pleaded for strict economy; but money spent on the Louisiana purchase was, in his view, economy, since it

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bought the future of a nation for twenty-seven and a quarter million dollars. An empire is cheap at four cents an acre; and Jefferson was true to his principles. He was a frontiersman, and he had bought the frontier. He believed in liberty, and he had enlarged the empire of freedom.

# V

## M I R A N D A

LONDON is a strange place. It may be because I am a Londoner myself, because I was born there and there seemed every probability, as I sat in my London basement eighteen months ago and listened to the German bombs, that I should die there too. But I retain a deep conviction that the world would be a very different place to-day, if there had never been a town called London.

The world's destiny has been changed by five cities. Athens was the first, where Greek hands forged the instrument of liberty which they have never lost. Rome was the next—not the cardboard stage-set that we know to-day, where a synthetic Cæsar wears his falling laurels, but the real city where strong Latin minds enthroned law supreme in the ordering of life. Third, and perhaps highest, came Jerusalem, where the mind of man groped towards something far above him. After these three cities had made their varied contributions to the course of human life, there seemed to be a pause in history—a pause that lasted all through the long, dragging centuries of the Middle Ages—until two other cities took up the tale. The first was Paris, where clear thought and high courage wrote the French Revolution into history and set free men the world over singing the *Marseillaise*. For that city on the Seine was not always a German policeman's paradise; and that marching air has had

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nobler uses than to form the bitter prelude to Pétain's despairing croak. And the last town is London, which has stood so often against abuses of authority, London which endured and overcame a nightly siege in 1940 and changed the history of the world. For if London had failed then, there would be no war for liberty to-day—only a sullen sea of subjugated nations.

But her great contribution is not always made in her own name. I mean, it has not always been Englishmen that London armed in the long fight for freedom. One day somebody will make a full list of those temporary Londoners. Lenin was a Londoner, before he changed the face of Russia. Marx was a Londoner, before he modified the economics of vast masses. Mazzini was a Londoner, before he restored self-respect to Italy—the spirit by which Garibaldi fought and Mussolini fades into insignificance. And London saw a whole contingent of foreign faces on its sidewalks, who brought freedom to a whole continent in South America. Their monuments stand proudly in Santiago, Lima, Buenos Aires, Bogota, and Caracas. But nearly every one of them once lived in a little house in a dull London street. They were safe there from the King of Spain's police; they made their plans there; and they had a hope that British ministers might help with British ships and British guns and money to turn their dream of freedom into reality.

England has always stood very close to freedom in South America for the simple reason that England asked no more than a chance to trade

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with the Spanish colonies. But Spain sacrificed their loyalty to two things—a senseless fiscal policy, that denied them the free use of their own produce, and a silly sort of snobbery or racialism, that asked their people overseas to feel inferior to home-born Spaniards. As they did not, and as they asked to trade with Britain, restless colonials in South America turned eagerly towards King George's ministers. Very early in the day they offered Pitt the vast territories of New Granada; and it was natural for the great precursor of the Liberators to make his home for long years in London. Not long ago I helped to find his house, a small house in a quiet street off Tottenham Court Road, in which Francisco Miranda dreamed his dreams and laid the plans that ultimately brought twenty free Latin-American republics into the world we know to-day.

Not that London was by any means his first port of call. For the great Venezuelan covered a great deal of ground before he corresponded freely with Pitt and Wellington. He saw something of the last stages of the fight for freedom by Britain's colonists in the New World. He saw the young Republic in the first years of its liberty: that was an object-lesson for a Spanish colonist, who had begun to find Spanish rule a sad obstruction. Then he was off to Europe with his mind full of dreams of freedom for America—for his America, the great continent that drowsed uneasily under its Spanish governors. He saw the Prussian army and the Russian empress, and he saw a great deal of life in London. He pleaded hard with Pitt for collaboration be-

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tween England and a free South America. But when the Bastille crashed in Paris and a new era dawned with the first onset of the Revolution, Miranda moved to Paris. He was not greatly interested in Englishmen or Frenchmen, but in the liberation of his own continent; and as it seemed as if the world would soon be liberated by the tri-colour of France, he joined the French army and pelted ministers with plans for carrying the cause of freedom across the ocean. Meanwhile, the war was on; and the fight for freedom had to be won in Europe.

The great exile served with the armies of the French Republic and rose to be a general. But as the shadow of invasion lengthened over France, the Republic had an uncomfortable way with generals. "Victory or death" was the motto of its private soldiers; and the executioner began to apply the same rule to the high command. Miranda tripped and fell in the tangle of French politics. But his gaze never shifted from the liberation of Spanish America; and as the weakness of the French at sea made it obvious that France could hardly stretch an arm across the ocean, he was soon back in London with his plans. That was the most crowded time in his long career of scheming. He knocked at every door that seemed to offer any chance of Venezuelan independence. The man who had arrived at Dover in a wig and green spectacles frequented ministers and politicians. Pitt received him well; but it was not easy to do much for Spanish exiles so long as Spain was sensible enough to keep on the same side as England. But when



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young plotters from the rest of South America, eager patriots from Peru, Chile, and the River Plate, appeared in England, the old hand in Grafton Street guided their footsteps through the mazes of society and the official world; and there is not the slightest doubt that the strange familiarity of Englishmen with South American by-ways owes almost everything to the indomitable Miranda. It turned steadily to sympathy and bore its fruit after he was gone, when Pitt's disciple, Canning, led England into a policy of friendship with the young republics, which stood between them and reconquest by the Old World and has never wavered since.

That was Miranda's legacy. But in his lifetime he enjoyed little of its promise. A life of hope, a life of scheming, a life of eager correspondence with stolid Englishmen who did less than he asked, though far more than they would have done, if he had never asked them—that was Miranda's weary lot. He tried his hand on North Americans as well. But though Alexander Hamilton appeared to grasp the vast importance of his cause, no action followed; and President Jefferson was not prepared to do more than let him buy guns in the United States, provided that he paid for them.

More than once he got British money. Once he very nearly got a British army. For an expeditionary force commanded by Sir Arthur Wellesley was all concentrated by the waiting transports at an Irish port, ready to sail for Venezuela and to make Miranda's dream come true, when the Government, as Governments are apt to,

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changed its mind and switched the army's destination to the coast of Portugal. Wellesley himself broke the sad news to Miranda and, with some discretion, broke it to him in the street in order to avoid a prolonged argument with a disappointed man indoors. So the redcoats, who might have liberated Venezuela in 1808, sailed for Vimiero and won the first battle of the Peninsular War. That brought the end of tyranny in Europe nearer. But it was bitter for Miranda.

His own efforts in the field ended in tragedy. For Spanish governors still had the power to repress Spanish patriots; and Miranda's life ended, like so much of the best blood of Spain, in a Spanish dungeon. But no man ever lived less in vain. The world we live in, the world where freedom stands in arms against its opposite, recognizes unhesitatingly a vast area of self-government in the Americas from the United States border to Cape Horn. Nobody outside a madhouse or the walls of Berchtesgaden believes that Latin-Americans will ever bow the knee to any force outside their continent, although the author of *Mein Kampf* naturally has his doubts as to the ability of people with dark hair to look after their own affairs. The fact remains that they have done so with considerable success in the last hundred years; and they propose to go on doing it in their own way on their own territories in the republics of the New World. They were not the product of an accident. It was logical and right that Spanish-speaking states four, five, and six thousand miles from Europe should find their way to freedom. But they might all have had

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to wait longer than they did, if one persistent man had not shown the way.

When San Martín led the army of the Argentine to the liberation of Chile and Peru, when Bolívar freed Venezuela and Colombia, they went up the trail that Miranda had blazed. He failed in his own lifetime. The British army of his dreams never sailed for the Orinoco because, when Latin-America was freed, it was freed by Latin-Americans. But he had taught them how to do it. The brown-faced, bright-eyed man, who talked and talked, and wrote and wrote in Grafton Street, and called on British ministers until he nearly, so very nearly got his way—he was the real architect of freedom in the South Atlantic.

## VI

### S A N M A R T Í N

I ALWAYS think a revolution is very like a thunderstorm; and, like most people of my generation, I have been out in both. First you have the flash of an idea. Sometimes, indeed, the flicker of preliminary thought goes on for years, like summer lightning below the horizon. Anyone who looked at the horizon in the reign of James I in England or the reign of Louis XV in France could see there was a revolution coming. There was a whole movement of ideas—the Puritan idea in England, and Voltaire and the Encyclopædists and Rousseau in France—whose drift was in direct conflict with the existing order. There was bound to be a revolution; and when it came, there was the lightning flash of an idea, followed by the thunder of revolutionary action.

Those are the two stages. Sometimes they come quite close together, and sometimes the first flicker on the skyline is seen years before the final crash. But once the process starts, a revolution is on. That is why two types of leader are required in revolution, the man of ideas and the man of action. Sometimes a single personality unites the qualities of both. Cromwell did. Robespierre very nearly did, but not quite. Danton did; and so did Lenin. Sometimes there is a horrid mess, because the men of ideas make the grave mistake of thinking they are men of action. That is what happened to the

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French Revolution of 1848, which came to nothing and ended in dictatorship and defeat in 1870. That is what happened to the German Revolution of 1918, which has already ended in dictatorship and is now driving its country irresistibly to defeat in 194—.

There are two types of leader; and you will find perfect specimens in the long revolutionary struggle that ended in the liberation of South America. First there was a long period of lightning below the horizon, of restless colonists dreaming of freedom, watching the successful fight for freedom of other colonists to the north of them where the Thirteen Colonies turned themselves into the United States, hearing snatches of the talk of freedom that drifted over the Atlantic from the French Revolution, gathering in little groups in Trinidad off the coast of Venezuela to see if England was disposed to help, gathering in back-rooms in London to make their plans and take their vows and launch their revolution on its final stage—the stage of action. Then the thinkers' work was done; and the revolution called for its soldiers.

On the whole the greatest of them was José de San Martín. He was what the world came to call afterwards an Argentine. Born in the Spanish colonies, he was a frontiersman from Corrientes; and, like his father, he became a Spanish soldier. He did the duty of all good Spanish soldiers in the years when Spain was threatened by Napoleon and helped to free his country from the foreigner. San Martín learned his business in the Peninsular War, fighting with the Spanish forces alongside Wellin-

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ton's men, when British arms were helping to free Europe from a New Order that looked like governing the whole continent from Warsaw to Seville. Then he turned back to see what he could do for his own countrymen across the Atlantic, for the colonists of the River Plate who were no longer content to be subjects of the King of Spain. The trouble was that nobody was very clear in 1812 who was the King of Spain. The rightful king was a French prisoner; a brother of Napoleon called himself King of Spain; and a Free Spanish Parliament insisted firmly that he was nothing of the kind, with the British to support them. The struggle for control in Spain, which we call the Peninsular War, left Spanish colonies with some of the bewilderment which French colonies know to-day. Where did their loyalty belong? Which side were they to take? With strong common-sense they sided with themselves and resolved upon their independence. That is why James Bryce has called Napoleon "the true Liberator of Spanish America". He did not mean to be. But when dictators manage to do something useful, it is mostly unintentional.

As the colonies declared their independence, they had to fight for it. The mother-country was not prepared to let them go without a struggle. Spain was a strong believer in the blessings of *Hispanidad* and fought a long war up and down the continent in order to confer them on its children. When they would not take their medicine, there was a fight; and San Martín was in the forefront. When the Argentine was cleared, he crossed the

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Andes and liberated Chile. That is easily said. But it is not easily done, when little armies have to be laboriously collected, licked into shape in the long training at Mendoza, and dragged four thousand strong with all their baggage and artillery over the shoulder of Aconcagua. Where the peaks rise above twenty thousand feet, the passes are none too easy for artillery and mounted men. But the Army of the Andes earned its name, when it marched across the Uspallata pass into Chile and drove the Spaniards out of the capital in the fight at Chacabuco. That battle was the Bunker Hill of Chilean independence; and when you stand, as I have, on the rocky field and look up at the mountains San Martín had crossed to fight there, you will feel that he earned his victory, and you may be proud that there were some Englishmen beside him.

Wars do not end with the first battle, especially wars between Spaniards; and San Martín went on to confirm Chilean independence in the battle of Maipú. So far he had shown himself an able soldier. But in the next stage of the emancipation of South America he proved his grasp of a larger form of warfare—war in two elements. His problem was to liberate the great region of Peru to the north up the Pacific coast. The Chileans had a fleet, a useful little fleet commanded by Cochrane; and when it had eliminated Spanish sea-power on the west coast of South America, Cochrane and San Martín were free to ship the army of the republic anywhere they chose, to ferry it in perfect safety up the coast, and land it where they liked in complete

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freedom. When it landed, it would have to fight the Spaniards. But it could choose its landing-place and shape the whole campaign according to the liberty which it enjoyed to use its sea communications. That was a perfect instance of the combined strategy to which Britain owed, and still owes, her power and safety; and very properly a British sailor commanded the undefeated fleet by which the gift was conveyed to the cause of freedom in South America, whilst an Argentine commander led the army. That is why, when you go to Chile, you will find a statue of Lord Cochrane on the waterfront at Valparaiso and San Martín riding in the great square of Lima in Peru. For the two of them carried freedom up the coast; and there it met another tide of freedom, which had been running strongly across the northern quarter of the continent directed by Bolívar. The two streams met almost on the Equator; and in the steamy little port of Guayaquil in Ecuador San Martín and Bolívar, the two liberators of a continent, confronted one another. The military task was nearly over, as the remaining Spanish armies were in no position to reverse the military situation; and as San Martín's work was almost done, he retired.

That retirement was the greatest victory that any man can win, a victory over himself. The continent was freed, and somebody would have to govern it. Who was it to be? That question brought in the stage that followed South American liberation with South American politics. But San Martín had no taste for politics; and he left the stage clear for Bolívar and his successors, whilst he went back



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to Argentina and, when politics followed him to Argentina, back to Europe, where he died thirty years later beside the English Channel.

San Martín's renunciation is one of the most singular events in history. Charles V, the Emperor, had attempted almost all that he had wished before he retired to a monastery. But San Martín, the soldier who had freed half a world, did not even think it right to attempt more. He might have grasped at power. He might have lived on in his country as the most venerated figure on the continent. But venerated figures are apt to become figures in dispute, figures over which rival crowds may fight and behind which politicians may do things that they could never do without a great man to hide behind. Venerated figures may turn, if they are not careful, into Hindenburgs and Pétains. But General San Martín's resolve was higher; and rather than become an object of dispute at home and rather than challenge Bolívar's conception of the Americas that he had helped to free, a lonely man went into twenty years of exile—by his own decision. For if San Martín was a soldier, he was something of a saint as well.





## VII

### GLADSTONE

THE English Revolution is rather like the English weather: it goes on all the time. Other countries have had revolutions since this island showed them how it should be done three hundred years ago. America had quite a handsome revolution, which produced the United States. France had a revolution that gave the world the *Marseillaise* and the First Republic. Russia had a revolution that substituted the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics for the Czar. Each of them began with a glorious explosion and ended by constructing something that was meant to be the last word in free government and to last for ever. Sometimes it did; sometimes it did not. Then there had to be another revolution of some kind to make another. But the English revolution was quite different: it never seemed to stop. It looked as though it had, like those rivers with an eccentric habit of disappearing underground for a few miles and then cropping up in unexpected places. It seemed to die with Cromwell's son. But it was soon going strong again—quite strong enough to turn James II off the throne and make sure that England was never ruled by the unaided wisdom of a king. Then it went underground and only reappeared in time to shift power to the middle classes by giving them the vote—that was called the Reform Act of 1832—and then to shift it a little lower down—

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that was called the Reform Act of 1867—then lower still—the Reform Act of 1885—and finally to spread it over the entire community by universal suffrage in the Act of 1918. It was running strongly all through the Nineteenth Century; and men got caught in it and carried off their feet before they knew where they were going—men who started life as “the rising hope of the stern, unbending Tories” and ended as “the People’s William” and “the Grand Old Man”.

That was the odd thing about the English Revolution: it never seemed to stop. There was not much fuss about it. No one seemed to sing the *Marseillaise* or wave red flags; and when they did, nobody paid very much attention. But the revolution was still on. That was how Britain managed to get a good deal farther than its neighbours on the path of progress, and a new President of the United States was forced to shock large numbers of his fellow-citizens in 1933 with a New Deal consisting largely of reforms that Mr. Lloyd George had introduced over here in 1912, and France was brought to the verge of revolution under M. Léon Blum in order to secure rights for French workers that had been enjoyed by British workers for two generations. It all looked so respectable in England; but the older Britain grew, the more revolutionary it became—just like Mr. Gladstone.

His name sounds so respectable to-day that we forget how old gentlemen in clubs used to turn pale, and later purple, when they heard it mentioned. We always think of him as an old man with floating hair and a burning eye; and it was

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quite a shock when Mr. H. G. Wells described him as "a white-faced, black-haired man of incredible energy, with eyes like an eagle's, wrath almost divine, and 'the finest baritone voice in Europe' ". That was only Mr. Wells' way of saying Mr. Gladstone once was young. But it would have been nearer the truth to say that Mr. Gladstone was never old.

Perhaps he was at his oldest as a prim young bridegroom of thirty after the slightly shattering experience of a double honeymoon, when Gladstone and another bridegroom married two sisters. That was enough to age any man; and when he finally shipped off his brother-in-law and was alone with Catherine, he read improving books and taught in Sunday-school and chose suitable works for the servants' library. At thirty-three he felt that life was nearly over and began to think about the end; and soon after that he began growing younger every year. At forty he was young enough to hate a foreign tyrant. Italy has always managed to produce the meanest bullies to misgovern other Italians; and what Gladstone saw at Naples gave him his first shock and convinced him that it was "the negation of God erected into a system of government" and "that as a gentleman and a Christian he feels it his duty to make known what he has seen of its proceedings". He did—and shocked his party-leaders, because he was still doing his best to be a good Conservative. But that was not so easy, when he saw Austrians ill-treating Italy. Austrians are still ill-treating Italy. But in Garibaldi's time Italians seemed to mind;

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and the Englishmen who cared for Italy minded too. That was what made Gladstone change sides in politics and become a Liberal; and after that his rejuvenation proceeded rapidly.

He was only fifty when he became the brightest young man in Palmerston's Cabinet; and crowds began to cheer "the People's William". The old Prime Minister looked at him with some apprehension and surmised that there would be strange doings when he was gone. There were; and Gladstone in his sixties headed one of the great reforming Governments of modern times. But sooner or later all reformers grow unpopular; and in due course the Ministry of 1868 went down in defeat. That looked like the end of Mr. Gladstone. He was sixty-five; his party was defeated; and his chief interest was now to get what he called "an interval between Parliament and the grave". He had already told the Queen that he had the strongest objection to "spending old age under the strain of that perpetual contention which is inseparable from his present position", and that he was busy "snapping the ties and winding out of the coil". He resigned his party leadership; he took a solemn farewell of the Queen; and he retired to read the books that he always wished to read, and to write a few himself, and to go on reading Homer all the time.

That was in 1875. But in '76 he noticed something. It was gradually borne in upon him that wrong was being done in Europe, that a government abroad was oppressing its subjects. He had noticed something of the kind before, and it had

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turned him from a Conservative into a Liberal. This time it turned him from a comfortable recluse into a Major Prophet, as he flamed into that enormous indignation in which he burnt up the Government and from which his relations with the Queen never recovered. Gladstone took the road at seventy, left his trees and library for Scottish school-rooms and draughty railway-carriage windows. Sympathy with downtrodden Italy had moved him from one side of English politics to the other; and now a conscience outraged by the Sultan of Turkey made him a crusader. He campaigned until the Government's majority withered away; he made the Queen an enemy for life; he put new energy into his party; he kept company with men who had been known a year or two before as republicans.

That was good going for an old gentleman of over seventy, who had retired from public life not long before to spend a quiet interval before the grave. But he was growing younger every year. He might have been born ten years before the Queen according to the calendar. But there was not the slightest doubt which of them was older now. Gladstone's second flowering was one of the most remarkable events in history; and after 1880 he never paused. Now he was young enough to take a broader view of the South African Republic than any of his contemporaries. The fighting at Majuba Hill did not make it easy; but Gladstone never took the easy way. He was young enough to shock his Whig colleagues over nearly everything; and when the Irish problem raised its head,



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he was young enough to shock Joseph Chamberlain by wishing to solve it on just principles. But the men around him looked on with middle-aged disapproval; and Gladstonian Home Rule was not permitted to forestall thirty years of dreary argument ending in tragedy and misunderstanding. Gladstone was too young for London—and for Dublin Castle—in 1886; and the old man went down fighting in his last crusade.

Not quite his last, though. For that remarkable old seer actually parted company with his last Cabinet in 1894 upon the issue of Disarmament. He had been too young for Joseph Chamberlain on Ireland; and he was too young for Joseph Chamberlain's son on Disarmament.

As the hunted years before the present war went by, Mr. Gladstone seemed the one great figure of the Nineteenth Century with whom we could discuss the morning's newspaper with some hope of an understanding answer, because there was that in him which does not age. He had an unfailing sense of right and wrong, a moral sense born of his deep personal religious faith. Gladstone was incapable of a covenant with evil. There was no place in that clear vision for the gentle haze of non-intervention, of appeasement, of neutrality minding its own business and letting the devil take the hindmost. In 1870 that clear voice warned France and Germany to stay out of Belgium and voted war-credits and sent British staff officers to Antwerp without the least regard to the unpleasant fact that there was not, in any modern sense, a British army, if anyone had cared to challenge it. In 1876 that

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moral imperative rang out in the direction of the present, when it commanded the oppressors "one and all, bag and baggage", to "clear out from the province they have desolated and profaned". That is a voice that still rings in our ears, the voice of a man who never grew old.

## VIII

### G A R I B A L D I

I WONDER how many of us still remember that men who cared for freedom once cheered the name of Italy. It was not so long ago. It is not many weeks since I was talking to an old gentleman in London, who remembered seeing someone driving down Piccadilly between cheering crowds. The figure they were cheering was a bearded man with a broad face that somehow had a way of looking rather like a lion's; and he wore a scarlet shirt like the shirts they used to wear in the slaughter-house at Buenos Aires. Sometimes he wore a *poncho*, too—a white *poncho* that he had brought with him from the River Plate—because there was a good deal of South America about Garibaldi.

When he drove down Piccadilly eighty years ago, he was a public hero with the freedom-loving subjects of Queen Victoria. Young ladies wore blouses modelled on his famous shirt; and enterprising manufacturers produced a biscuit that bore his honoured name and is still a lovely memory. All London fought its way upstairs to shake his hand at immense receptions, and the Government began to wonder what to do with him. "Do?" said Lord Palmerston, who was Prime Minister. "Oh, let's marry him to the rich Miss Coutts." Someone objected that the nation's guest already had a wife. "Oh, then," said the Prime Minister, "we'll get Gladstone to explain her away." Nobody quite

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knows what General Garibaldi made of it all. He was a very simple man. But he could hardly fail to notice that they were all cheering him, although he was not always altogether clear who it was that did the cheering, because when an English duke of high principles and unblemished reputation paraded immense numbers of Sunday-school children at a garden fête in his honour, the hero was convinced that they were all more or less related to the duke. But the whole of England, high and low, gave Garibaldi an enthusiastic welcome over here for the simple reason that he was, in his own person, the embodiment of freedom.

It was not always so. It was not so when he was a young sailor in the Mediterranean, sailing ships in and out of every port between Genoa and Constantinople. He was an intelligent seaman, because once he left the sea to tutor an Italian family at Stamboul. But he went back to the sea; and in a sailor's inn at a port on the Black Sea he ran across a man who told him there was work for intelligent young men to do in Italy. The nature of the work was simple, because Italy—not for the last time in its history—was held down by a foreign army and a few mean Italian tyrants. Then, as now, there was only one way for an Italian to be a patriot; and that was to be a conspirator. Garibaldi was not a good conspirator, although he did his best. It seemed a good idea for him to join the Sardinian navy as a seaman, capture a cruiser, and occupy the naval arsenal at Genoa. But the mutiny did not succeed; and a court-martial sentenced him to death. His sense of duty was not so strong as to

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compel him to wait for the sentence to be carried out; and he bolted for Marseilles.

After that he sailed under the French flag to South America. If he could not fight for freedom in Italy, he would fight for it elsewhere. As Uruguay was fighting a war of independence against the Brazilians, Garibaldi took service there; and the next twelve years of his career were passed in South America. They were anything but idle. He was a sailor first; and he did what very few men—even sailors—have ever done. He fell in love with a pretty girl on a river bank through a telescope. He went ashore and promptly proposed marriage. But as he did it in Italian and the only language that she understood was Portuguese, the shock to the young lady was not quite so sudden as it might have been, although he got his way in the long run.

Then he turned himself into a soldier. There were a fair number of Italians in the New World, who occupied the interval before freedom could be won for Italy by fighting for it somewhere else; and Garibaldi raised an Italian Legion in Uruguay. Democracy has always flourished in the little country by the River Plate; and the Garibaldians fought for it under a banner of their own, a great black banner, for Italy's mourning, with a burning mountain, for the steady burning of her hope. Their uniform was a consignment of red shirts, which an importer had failed to sell to cattle-slaughterers in Buenos Aires and disposed of in Montevideo, just across the river, to Garibaldi and his Legion.

That was a historic accident, which brought

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coloured shirts into modern politics. But as red is a far better colour than black or brown, the men inside the red shirts were better men than ever walked in Fascist or Nazi uniform. They wore them just because they wanted something they could fight in, not because they wanted to dress up for politics. For the red shirt of Garibaldi was a soldier's uniform, not a politician's fancy-dress; and his Legion wore it with distinction in South America, until the call came from their own country.

1848 was a bad year for policemen everywhere, and for German policemen in particular. Italy stirred in its long sleep under the tyrant and the foreigner; and as the flame began to rise inside the burning mountain, Italian *sbirri* and Austrian gendarmes ran to cover behind their soldiers. Hopes rose, as an Italian king went out to fight for the revolutionary principle that Italians were the right men to govern Italy. But though his principles were sound, his army was not quite so good. Garibaldi, who was not too proud to fight on the same side as a king when the king happened to be right, had joined him with three thousand volunteers. But though they hung on the Austrian flank between the mountains and the lakes along the northern edge of Italy, it was no more than a clever rearguard action ending with an escape into Switzerland.

The next year was more promising, because Mazzini and his men seized Rome itself and proclaimed it a republic. It was a long time since anything resembling freedom had been seen in Rome; and there was an ugly rush of foreign armies to

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avert this scandalous event. The Austrians were close at hand; the Spaniards began to think about a move; but the French actually moved. A French expedition was shipped to Italy; but before it reached the gates of Rome, twelve hundred Garibaldians marched down the Corso in red shirts and green cloaks behind a bearded man, who rode slowly on a white horse with a white *poncho* on his shoulders and a great mane of golden hair. A tall negro rode behind Garibaldi on a black horse with a blue cloak and a lasso at his saddle-bow. For there was always an American touch about him, even though he had ridden in to defend Rome—the Colosseum and St. Peter's and the Capitol—from foreign soldiers. They were just in time. When the French tried to rush the place, they failed. When they besieged it, that took time; and the Roman Republic lived once again in the shelter of Garibaldi's guns. It was a short and glorious life, because they could scarcely hope to hold off the French indefinitely; and one cruel day the last attack broke through the last defence. Rome had fallen; and before the French marched in, Garibaldi rode slowly once again through Rome. In the great square before St. Peter's he checked his horse and called for volunteers in a great voice. He told them there was nothing he could promise them but "hunger, thirst, forced marches, battle and death". (It is just two years since another leader promised much the same to another nation.) That was Garibaldi's offer; and four thousand men marched out of Rome with him that night. The Austrians hunted them; and in the long retreat the

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girl whom he had seen by a Brazilian river died in his arms.

But as he put out to sea, he cried, "*Viva l'Italia.*" For he still held to his faith that tyranny would be driven out of Italy. Ten years later he was helping Frenchmen and Italians to free the north; and in 1860 he freed the south himself practically single-handed. A few cases of condemned muskets came by rail; a little piracy got him two ships; and one night he put out under a great May moon from Quarto. There were just a thousand of them; and they captured Sicily. Then they started up the length of Italy, with Garibaldi driving peacefully in a brougham. There was a little fighting in the Roman Marches; and within a year an Italian was proclaimed King of Italy (which is more than his grandson is to-day). But the man who made him king was Garibaldi.

That was the man whom Londoners turned out to cheer eighty years ago in Piccadilly, for whom dukes assembled multitudes of school-children. He was the embodiment of fearless freedom in a world that had by no means achieved self-government, a world in which dishonoured tyrannies were frequently appeased in the customary hope that some good might come of it. It never did. It never does. Garibaldi was the last man to walk delicately in the presence of injustice; he was incapable of appeasement. He lacked the subtlety to understand the delicately balanced nonsense which still maintained foreign troops in Rome; and he marched in to put them out. He was defeated; he had been defeated more than once before. But



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within three years Rome was the capital of United Italy. Not that his crusades—or his crusaders—were all Italian. For when the Germans assailed France, Garibaldi and his men remembered that it was the French who had won three-quarters of Italian freedom for them; and they fought for France. His life was one long fight for freedom; and it is worth remembering that there were once Italians who could fight. But perhaps they fight rather better when they are on the right side: Garibaldi always was.

## IX

### SHAFTESBURY

**H**ALF the charm of history lies in its unlikely meetings. The fact that Mark Twain took the chair for Mr. Churchill at his first public lecture in New York just after the war in South Africa is quite without significance. But I find it fascinating; and I should regard a biography of either man that left it out as gravely defective. So is the fact that, when the extremely earnest sister of the heroic General Gordon left tracts on unresisting residents in the outskirts of Southampton, she included in her round a grim old man named Rosas, who had been dictator of the Argentine and anticipated many of the worst features of the fancy-dress dictatorships of modern Europe: nobody has ever told how they were received.

But the best of all strange meetings are those in which unlikely people find themselves somehow related to each other and are forced to rub along together as members of the same family. I do not mean ill-fitting marriages (although there have been enough of these in history), but strange relationships; and I know none stranger than the fact that Lord Shaftesbury, the good Lord Shaftesbury, was son-in-law to the gay Lord Palmerston.

One was a cheerful man in middle age with few regrets, an immense knowledge of the world, and unlimited experience in diplomacy and politics. At home he kept a modest racing-stable and shot

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his own pheasants with enjoyment, when he could take time off from reading masses of official papers; and in politics he kept his country's end up with an almost impudent dislike of Continental tyrants, that made Palmerston (and England) unpopular in those foreign quarters where it is an honour to be disliked, and a deep, crusading hate of slavery, whoever might own or sell or transport the slaves. That may have been what brought the two together, when they met as relatives. Of course it was Lady Cowper's girl, Minnie, really; because the younger man had married her, and when Lord Palmerston married her charming mother, he found that young Lord Ashley, son of the sixth Earl of Shaftesbury, was his son-in-law.

That was odd for both of them. For one thing, they were in opposing parties. Palmerston was a Whig—he was actually Foreign Secretary in a Whig Government—whilst Ashley was a Tory. He was a strange sort of Tory, though. Whilst he seemed to share some of the negatives of which Toryism was made up—he had opposed the Reform Bill of 1832, which gave more people votes, although he was in favour of Free Trade, which gave more people bread—he was interested in another side of politics altogether. Indeed, the things that really interested this strange young man in the Thirties of the Nineteenth Century were questions that had not yet got into politics at all in England or anywhere else. Nobody in politics was greatly interested in the abominable cruelty of cleaning chimneys by sending small boys up inside them. But Lord Ashley campaigned actively to stop the practice.

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Public men in search of votes were not much concerned with the dumb victims of the blind industrial development that had followed the Napoleonic wars. They were unrepresented in Parliament for the simple reason that they had no votes and no influence. But Lord Ashley carried on unwearying campaigns for legislation that might somehow mitigate their situation; and he succeeded steadily in nagging his own party and their opponents into passing a succession of Factory Acts with that object. He was prepared to sacrifice his own career as a rising politician to the things that he believed in. When he was offered minor office, he refused it because the Prime Minister would not support the Ten Hours Bill—the *Ten Hours Bill*. Those were the working conditions of industry when Shaftesbury began his campaign for improvement, that only ended with his death forty years later. He got his way eventually; he got it over the wide field of his inclusive sympathies, from mine-workers to poor school-children in crowded cities.

His career was a strange outcrop of the English conscience, which had moved the plain russet-coated captains of the English Revolution and now recurred in the person of the heir of a sixth Earl. They had acted as they did in Cromwell's day largely because they believed it to be the command of revealed religion that they should so act towards the King, whom they beheaded, and the Commonwealth of England which they set up in his place. Lord Shaftesbury was guided in almost every act of his long career by the action of his religious faith

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upon his conscience. Sometimes it moved him to a humanitarian crusade to rescue helpless people from the grinding slavery of the machines. Sometimes it led him to resist with equal fervour the abomination of army bands positively playing music—cheerful music—in the public parks on Sunday afternoons. Both causes found him equally convinced that he was right and equally prepared to face the consequences. He refused office for the first; and when he got his way about the second, he went home to Grosvenor Square, drew down the blinds, and waited for the ungodly to break his windows. In both cases it was an outcrop of the English conscience, which no foreigner has ever understood. It was an echo of the Commonwealth recurring in the Nineteenth Century. It was just what Cromwell would have done. Shaftesbury was one of the few public men in Queen Victoria's reign whom Cromwell could have understood. He would have had some difficulty with Mr. Gladstone; and he would not have understood Lord Palmerston at all. But he could have made his book with Shaftesbury.

Not that the English conscience is peculiar to England. It is the soul of Scotland; and when it crossed the ocean, it became the spirit of New England. Shaftesbury would have felt himself at home in some circles in New England. He would have known what to say in a crowded meeting of Boston Abolitionists at Faneuil Hall. For the English conscience is not confined to British territory. It is an English-speaking conscience; and it underlies the strange fact that, however far apart

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they may be at the beginning of a war against injustice, Great Britain and the United States are generally found together at the end. Shaftesbury might be an earl; but he had a great deal in common with large numbers of Americans a generation later than himself. That was the strange thing about him. He was almost alarmingly in advance of his own generation. Yet he was by no means a unique phenomenon in English history, a shooting-star in a dark sky, because he manifests a recurrence of the old Puritan tradition applied to a new set of problems, of the spirit that inspired the Parliament men and had been kept alive in the interval by the Wesleyans and the Evangelicals. They were all the consequence of one potent fact, the English Bible. The Reformation in England had made its followers a people of the Book; and its inspiration produced Shaftesbury no less than Cromwell.

It led them in the minor phases of their policy no less than in their large achievements. Cromwell had readmitted Jews to England in part, no doubt, because of a belief in toleration, but in part because their readmission seemed to fulfil divine revelation and to bring the Day of Judgment comfortingly nearer. Shaftesbury went one stage further in the same belief and pressed his formidable father-in-law as early as 1840 to restore the Jews to Palestine in order to fulfil the prophecies. Napoleon had once made a slightly unconvincing offer of the same kind, when it appeared to present some military advantage in his campaign against the Turks; and now Palmerston was almost per-

suaded by his earnest son-in-law to create a Jewish buffer-state in Palestine between the Turks and Egypt. Neither of them seemed to notice that a considerable Arab population had accumulated in this region in the long interval since Holy Writ. But Shaftesbury urged what Cromwell would have urged; and Palmerston was almost persuaded.

His Minnie's husband's teaching was more persuasive upon matters nearer home; and Palmerston was a willing convert to his industrial reforms. When the old statesman went to the Home Office, his hand was near the levers Shaftesbury was always trying to control; and his social legislation in the early Fifties was a credit to them both. That is the lasting side of Shaftesbury's achievement. His theology and his Church politics were his own affair; but his contribution to the better lives of Englishmen and English children in an age before such matters were the common theme of politics is ineffaceable. He was forcing Parliaments to legislate about social matters without Marxian dialectic and before the rags that went into the paper upon which the Communist Manifesto was written were even woven. Shaftesbury was a religious, not an intellectual, phenomenon. His counterparts come from an earlier age of English history; and his influence was upon those elements of English faith and English feeling, which are unchanging. He would have found a place in the English Revolution; and the revolution lived on in the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, one of these odd associations that sometimes make events in England a little hard for foreigners to understand.







## C L E M E N C E A U

**J**UST how young does a man have to be to win a war? The last war was won for France by a man of seventy-seven for the simple reason that Georges Clemenceau at seventy-seven was the youngest man in France. He was the French Revolution incarnate; and a revolution is always young.

France in 1917 had stumbled through a phase of mutiny and disintegration, when her soldiers would not fight and her politicians failed to administer, very like the dark shallows of defeat in which she foundered in 1940. Men were already muttering about making terms with the enemy; the young Laval was learning his ignoble business from such masters as Caillaux and the traitor Bolo; and General Pétain, always a pessimist, was depressing everyone. But the waters of defeat were stayed in 1917, because France turned to Clemenceau. He was not young; he was not popular. He was a ferocious critic of everybody else; but he believed in France—and in victory. The grounds for his belief were simple. He believed in victory, because they had to have it. He had seen through many things in a long life. He doubted most of them; but he never doubted his own country.

It was a curious career. He started as a doctor; he wrote articles; he gave French lessons at a girls' school in the United States (Clemenceau was one

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of those rare Frenchmen who know English). He was one of the few Deputies who voted against the peace-treaty after the French defeats of 1870. Thirty years afterwards, when he was speaking in the Senate, he said, "Gentlemen, we are defeated France; but we are still France. Once, because our foreign policy was wrong, we had no allies and we lost the provinces which I shall never forget." He never forgot them. For forty years this Radical remembered through all the fierce distractions and disputes of home politics that Alsace and Lorraine had been stolen by the Germans; and just forty-seven years after the theft he helped to win them back for France.

That was his one firm belief, France and the French Revolution. He found the answer to all questions in the great years between the fall of the Bastille and the ignoble substitution of an armed soldier for the people's will by Napoleon Bonaparte. Somebody once called him a character out of a book by Victor Hugo; and there is an element of truth in it. Most of Hugo's characters are totally unlife-like, because they have only a single quality. Most people in real life have more than one; but Clemenceau, by the time that he reached old age in the blackest moment of a war, was completely single-minded. He existed for one purpose, to conduct the war; he had one policy, to win it.

In a way he was not unlike Victor Hugo himself at one instant of his career, when distracted politicians came to the great poet in a grave moment of internal politics. The other side appeared to be about to triumph by the use of naked force. What

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was to be done, they asked. Everything, said Victor Hugo. That was precisely Clemenceau's reply to his country's call in November, 1917; and in twelve months the war was over. He did everything. His critics said he did too much. In war-time there is a superstition that war is far too difficult for civilians to understand. Clemenceau once said that it is far too serious to leave to soldiers. When he found that the pessimistic Pétain was inadequate, he helped to raise Foch to supreme command of the Allies. They were worlds apart on everything except the war. Clemenceau was an unbeliever; Foch was deeply religious. It was not very safe for French politicians to associate themselves with organized religion. But Clemenceau had always taken risks, and Foch was one of them. He took it; and the war was won.

In one of Mr. Churchill's essays you will find an account of a day with the old man on the battlefield in the worst days of 1918, when the war looked like ending in a hurry and ending the wrong way. The main difficulty was to get the old Prime Minister out of the danger zone. He enjoyed himself immensely away from all the bothers of his office, talking to soldiers, attending to a wounded horse, and seeing the realities of war for a few hours instead of the shadowy vexations of directing it. I have often thought that Mr. Churchill learned a good deal of the art of how to be Prime Minister in wartime from old Clemenceau, whose programme was "to make war". That was Mr. Churchill's promise, when he took office in 1940; and I see him, in some ways, as a British Clemenceau. France's

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tragedy in 1940 was that it lacked a French Churchill.

But it had one in 1918, when an old man dragooned a nation, that had begun to weaken, into victory. He had never been a professional patriot. On the contrary, his side in politics had been opposed to the ranged orthodoxies of Church and Army. He was the Revolution—he was the enemy of hierarchies. When smug French soldiers felt it their duty to support the condemnation of a French staff officer named Dreyfus for espionage, because he was a Jew, Clemenceau's patriotism was higher than the army's; and he fought for the truth as he saw it without regard to flag-wagging and judged by the solitary test of principle, of revolutionary truth. Unlike some lovers of their country, who always seem to love it for the stupidest man in it and maunder about peasant virtues in a Casino at Vichy, Clemenceau loved France for its intelligence. His patriotism was always broader than the current model. He once defined it as "diversity, that is liberty". His immense belief in human freedom and in human dignity informed his passion for his country; and long before the war he had defined his ideal of world-peace—"the peace of France, the peace of free consciences, the peace of equal rights extending to all men, without distinction of caste, class or privilege, all the fullness of life".

That was Clemenceau's ideal, for which he fought through a long life of hard fighting. Not that he was always in the battle, because he had a clear and delicate appreciation of the classics and loved to write, without any affectation of learning, about

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ancient Athens. He knew his Gibbon; unlike some public men, he was not ashamed to have heard of Greece and Rome; and when he wrote about them, he was less self-conscious than most English-speaking statesmen, when they venture upon any topic earlier than last week's news. He was fiercely anti-clerical; but it would be untrue to call him anti-religious. Clemenceau once told the Senate that he could and would destroy Church policy, but was happy to know that he could not destroy a single belief in a single conscience. That was the quality of Clemenceau's unbelief.

The old man was a Roman, wrapped in the frock-coat of Nineteenth-Century science; and his country was quite *creed enough* for him. Long before the war he told somebody "that Athens and Rome, the two greatest things of the past, were swept away on the day that the sentry failed". France's sentry was *not going to fail, if Clemenceau could help it; and he stood on guard for forty years.*

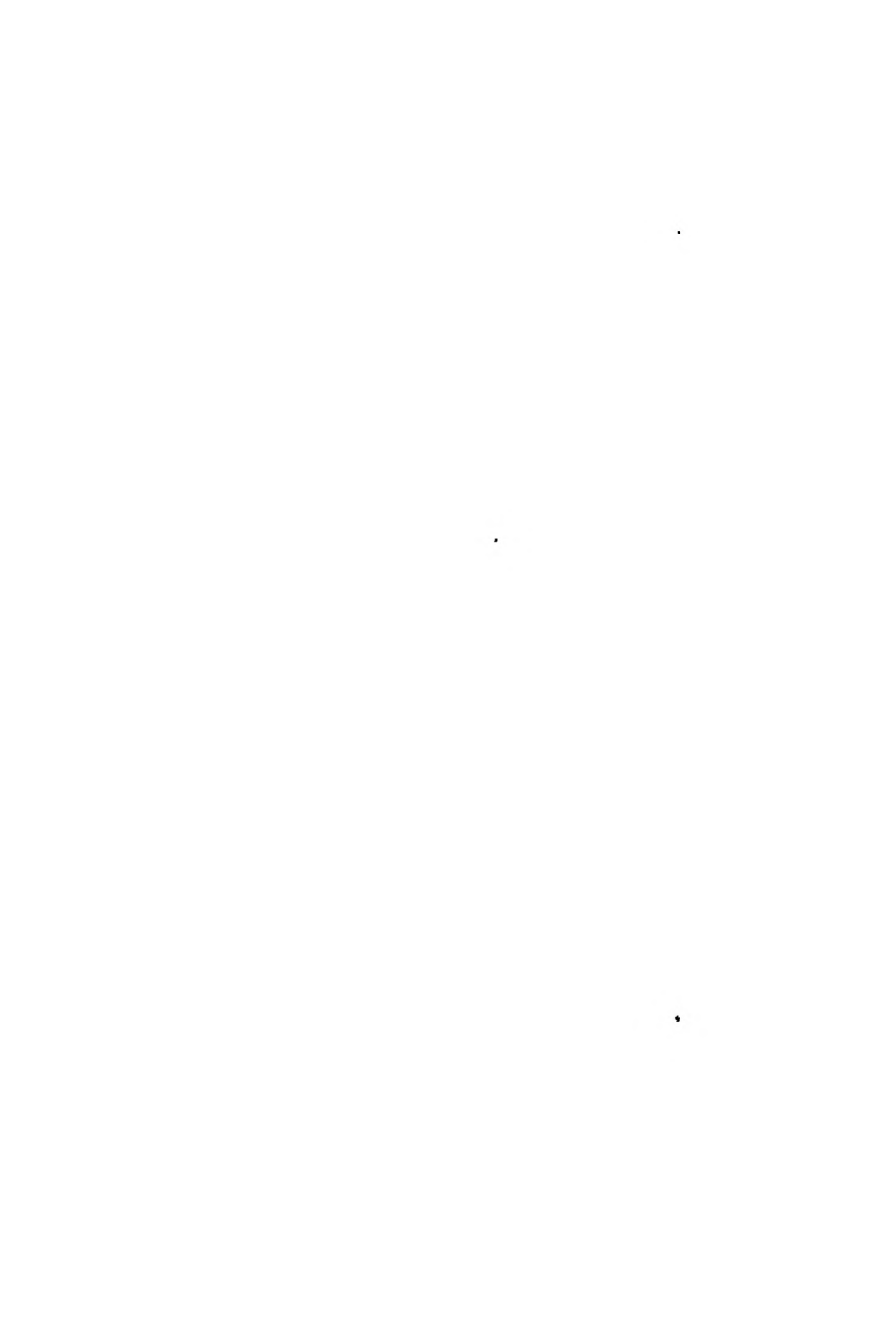
Clemenceau's attachment to his country was not just a local passion. He had that as well. He was passionately attached to the villages of his own Vendée. But he loved it for the fierce attachment of one section of his ancestors to the Revolution. For he adored the Vendée that stood for the Republic and hated the Vendée that rose against it. So with France. He loved his country for the Revolution. He was intellectually convinced that the French Revolution was right; and his emotions were satisfied by the fact that it was French. More than any politician of the century that followed it, Clemenceau was the Revolution incarnate. He

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would have fought for it; he would have stormed the Bastille; he would have voted for the execution of the King; he would have marched to the frontier, when foreign monarchs challenged it. He was revolutionary and French; and it is not surprising that, when the tricolour began to droop in 1917, it was upheld by Clemenceau.

There is a weary stage in every war, when the perspective of endurance seems to run almost out of sight. The first thrill is over; and there seems to be no reason why the war should not go on for ever. That is the danger-point. That is the moment when faint hearts grow fainter and evil tongues begin to wag, when creeping things crawl out into the daylight with ugly hints of a deliverance, of easy compromise, of a comfortable life of "collaboration" with the enemy. That moment has come twice to France. The second time it came at Bordeaux, when there was nobody to stem the dark waters of defeat; and they closed above her head. But the first time it came in 1917 at Paris; and it found a fierce old man, who did not fail his country and won the war at seventy-seven.

A few weeks ago the brave Frenchman who is still the emblem of French resistance was speaking of the present year of strain. General de Gaulle called it "Clemenceau's hour". There is no more testing time, and no greater tribute to the man who saved the cause of human freedom on the Continent a quarter of a century ago.







## X I

### L E N I N

**T**HERE are some names in history that matter. The men who bore them really made a difference. If they had not been there, things would not have worked out in the same way, and the whole course of later history must have gone round by another channel. I doubt if there are more than one or two of them in any century. But they exist; and there is no mistaking them when they occur. Napoleon is one. Napoleon made an immense difference to the last century. He gave France a new lease of life, though in a way the drain which he imposed on French man-power set a clear limit to how long that life could be. He paved the way for a united Germany. His intervention in Spain was the direct cause of the liberation of Latin America from Spanish rule. Those were all big things. Some of them were things he meant to do, and some of them were not. (Most dictators get their best effects unintentionally.) In this century, although we are not half-way through, you can see plainly what an immense difference was made by Lenin. I doubt if Russia would be a modern state to-day, I am quite convinced that Russia would not present the solid obstacle that it does to our common enemy, if Lenin had not been born. And there is just this difference between Lenin and Napoleon. Some of the largest consequences of Napoleon's career were unintentional. All that Lenin did was precisely

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what he meant to do. His life was full of accidents; but the effect that he produced on history was just what he intended it to be.

He had a will; he had a mind; and, better still, he had an education. The world is suffering to-day from the accident that has let power slip into the hands of a few ill-educated men. Lenin was a school-teacher's son; and he did well at school himself. I am continually exasperated by those complacent individuals who tell rows of helpless school-children that, when they were at school, they were always at the bottom of the class—and look at them now. There is no need for those who have the sense to work, when they are told, to feel discouraged by the subsequent success in life of those who never did a stroke. When prize-winners feel discouraged, let them remember that Lenin once won a gold medal at school.

His university career was interrupted, though, because his politics kept getting in the way. He had developed a burning interest in politics for a very simple reason. The Czar's police, who often made mistakes, had made the gravest error of their lives. They made it, when they hanged a young man in the Fortress of Peter and Paul at Petrograd. That is the reason why it is called Leningrad to-day. The man they hanged that day was Lenin's elder brother. He was devoted to his brother; and that execution turned him into a revolutionary. I have often wondered how things would have worked out for Russia, if the Czar's police had left that young man alive and Lenin had gone on being educated as a lawyer.

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Now he turned a formidable mind to another side of education. He began to learn the reasons and the method of revolution; and this time the Czar's police were more than usually helpful. They did not mean to be. But there is one feature of the old Russian penal system, which is frequently misjudged. Under the Czar Siberia always used to be a name of terror. But it was not always quite so bad as it sounded; and I have often thought that Siberia was just what brought the Russian Empire down—not because it was so terrible, but because it gave the revolutionaries time to think.

What could be a better university for a young revolutionary than a little room on the far side of Siberia beyond the Yenisei, where Lenin could read and read and argue with the girl, who had crossed half a continent to marry him? (Their honeymoon took the austere form of translating the Webbs' *Industrial Democracy* together.) He was an exile now; and after Siberia there was an interminable succession of little rooms in foreign lodging-houses, first in Germany and then in London. I hope that grateful revolutionaries will repay their debt to London one day. After all, Karl Marx could hardly have written *Das Kapital* without the reading-room of the British Museum; and that was where Lenin came to study the development of Marx's theory. The tops of London omnibuses and the view from Primrose Hill gave him an airing; and after that he moved on to Switzerland, where the library was not quite so good, perhaps, but the views were better.

One accident, if one can call the tragedy of his brother's execution an accident, had turned him

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to politics; and now another accident very nearly ended his political career, when he cycled dreamily into the back of a Geneva tram. His dream was to create a small body of whole-time professional revolutionaries, of "people whose profession consists of revolutionary activity. This organization must not be very broad and as conspirative as possible. . . . Give us an organization of revolutionaries—and we shall turn Russia upside down."

Large numbers did not interest him greatly, and he was never impressed by amateurs. (Perhaps that was why his later interview with Mr. H. G. Wells was hardly a complete success.) What Lenin wanted was a group of sympathizers, whose whole-time occupation was to make the coming revolution and whose numbers might be very small indeed. He got it in his Bolsheviks; and when the Russian Revolution seemed to start in 1905, all the exiles sang the Revolutionary Funeral March in a Geneva restaurant, and he asked a faithful follower in Russia to "send a torpedo-boat for me at once". Geneva being where it is, another method was adopted; and Lenin, at thirty-five, was soon flitting up and down St. Petersburg without his beard and hoping for a time when there would be fewer speeches and more practical street-fighting. For 1905 was the false dawn of the Revolution. Russia was not yet the place for Lenin; and as he stumbled through a winter night across the frozen sea off the coast of Finland to catch a steamer and go back to exile, the ice began to shift beneath him, and he thought quickly that this seemed a foolish way to die.

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But Lenin did not die in 1905. He lived on in Switzerland, working hard all day in the public library, and then going to the pictures until they got too silly and there was nothing left but a walk by the lakeside. He was getting older now. The return to exile had been a dreary business, which made him feel "as if I had come here to lie down in my grave". But Lenin's grave is not in Zurich, though the Red Square at Moscow seemed a long way off in those years before the war of 1914, when he began to doubt "whether I will live to see the next rise of the tide". (This might be worth remembering, when smaller men than Lenin feel discouraged.) There he was, a baldheaded man in a Swiss lodging-house. He was getting on for fifty; and he told an audience early in 1917 that "we of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of this coming revolution". Before the year was out, he had made the revolution of his dreams and was ruling Russia.

But how was he to get there? They were still in Switzerland. There was a war on; and the whole width of Germany lay between him and his country. By a strange twist of German policy the German Minister in Switzerland made a solemn treaty with Lenin and his little party, by which they were to be conveyed across the Continent. As Germany seemed to have nothing to lose by keeping its word, the agreement (unlike some other German treaties with the Russians) was duly kept; and Lenin travelled home to Russia by consent, and with the assistance, of the German High Command. It must be pleasant for the Germans to

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reflect to-day upon the debt they owe to the Great General Staff of 1917. For they made Lenin possible; and Lenin made the Russian Revolution.

Not that it was a foregone conclusion by any means. When the train that I was in a few years ago clanked across a little bridge at Byelo-Ostroff out of Finland into Russia, I remembered that when Lenin's train crossed it in 1917, he asked someone at the station if they were going to arrest him, when he got to Petrograd. And when my train arrived at the Finland Station with its greasy wooden platform and depressing iron pillars, that was exactly where Lenin had seen a line of waiting soldiers, as he got out of the railway-carriage and wondered whether they were there to arrest him. An officer came up; but instead of doing anything unpleasant he saluted, and a relieved Lenin saluted back. A large bouquet appeared from somewhere; and they all moved into a waiting-room, where someone made a speech of welcome. It was rather a high room, and Lenin stared at the ceiling. He had never been in there before, because it was the Czar's waiting-room. Then they went outside; a band played; and Lenin climbed on to an armoured car and made a speech. That was how he came home to Lenin-grad. The rest is Russian history.

It was an odd career. Fifty-four years of life, twenty years of exile, and five years of power make a strange pyramid of time. But if Napoleon once said grandiloquently, as his army was going into action against the Turks in Egypt, that from the Pyramids forty centuries were looking down, it is a great deal truer that a good many centuries will

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contemplate with interest the strange, truncated monument of Lenin's life. His achievement was the unaided product of his own mind and will. He thought harder than most men; he worked far longer at things of which nothing seemed to come; he passed half his life in the darkness of exile or prison. But in the end he lifted his whole country forward towards the light.



## XII

### M A S A R Y K

WHEN a great English writer, who knew his business, wrote:

*There are nine and sixty ways of constructing  
tribal lays,  
And every single one of them is right!*

he knocked the bottom clean out of the more pretentious forms of criticism. For, in writing, any method is correct, by which you get correct results; and that is just as true of writing history as of writing epic poems. There is more than one way of writing history; and all of them are right, provided that they bring you as near as you can get to the truth. Some historians deal in the mass, in the blind tendencies at work on the whole population, and then study their effect as driving-forces behind the great events of history. They are not easy to detect; and there is a strong temptation to discover *only those forces which account for something that actually happened* without noticing that it very nearly did not happen at all. And if it had not, I suppose that some historian of equal wisdom would discover a quite different set of causes for a wholly different result. So much of human history turns on small human accidents that I confess I have not much faith in the exploration of these blind, impersonal causes. I prefer to think that the leading influence on human life is human beings—single

individuals, who threw their weight decisively into the scale and turned it. Of all human events that is most true of revolutions. The English Revolution would not have run the course that it did without Cromwell. The Russian Revolution must have flowed another way without Lenin. When the American Revolution created the United States, they would have been quite different without Thomas Jefferson; and when the revolution of 1918 ended the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and created, amongst other things, Czechoslovakia, that republic would not have been the same without a coachman's son named Thomas Masaryk.

We sometimes forget the revolution of 1918, which destroyed the Hapsburg Monarchy in Central Europe before the Allied armies got there—and long before the Allied statesmen ratified what it had done in the peace-treaties. It was a spontaneous explosion; and it was long overdue, because the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, by which large numbers of Czechs, Slovaks, Yugoslavs, and Italians had been governed from Vienna, was an out-of-date monstrosity that cast an unnatural shadow on half-a-dozen countries. It was not quite so bad as it had been two generations earlier, because it was not quite so large. In those days Austrian police had kept order in the streets of Milan, and German-speaking officers in white Austrian uniforms made themselves at home in Venice. That stupid and unnatural tyranny had been disposed of in the Nineteenth Century. But the Austrians were still masters of Trieste and Prague and Sarajevo. Their half-witted levity had caused the war of 1914 in

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defence of their wholly indefensible authority over the Jugoslavs; and they were still masters of the Czechs.

The Czech coachman sent his son to school in hopes that they might make a teacher of him. But he had to work with his hands, first as a locksmith's apprentice in Vienna, and later as a village blacksmith. Then a school-teacher, who knew the boy, induced his parents to let him continue with his education; and he struggled on, doing a bit of tutoring to keep himself alive. At thirty he was a private tutor in Vienna; at thirty-nine he was a lecturer in philosophy; and when he was just turned forty, he resigned a seat in Parliament because he felt that he did not know enough. This is what comes of having a sound education. No one ever heard of an uneducated politician being so overcome by his own ignorance as to resign. Most of them seem to have a Message without bothering themselves about things like that. But Masaryk had a mind; and he found his message afterwards.

That high standard of intelligence was the strange thing about his whole career. When it was all over, and he was the venerated President of a state which he had created, it is odd to read descriptions of the old man's surroundings. One does not expect to find successful revolutionaries and heads of European states in rooms full of books. They have books, of course. They even write them sometimes. But nobody supposes that they read. Even when they write, they are generally quite incapable of writing a real book on a real subject, which is not just a collection of their political opinions. But

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Masaryk was a real scholar and a real philosopher. Indeed, his scholarship was real enough to be quite uncontrolled by his political opinions. He was a patriotic Czech. He believed in the value of Czech ideals and Czech tradition. But his early work went far to destroy the forgeries of two well-meaning patriots, who had fabricated mediaeval texts designed to prove the high standard of Czech culture in the Middle Ages. If Masaryk had been more of a partisan and less of a scholar, he might have let them stand. I cannot think a German scholar who felt doubts about the genuineness of the *Nibelungenlied* would press the matter very far. But Masaryk was not a German.

This thoughtful man surveyed the world in which he lived and noticed that his people's life was overshadowed by Vienna. That pleasant city has inspired more nonsense than almost any other European capital. Most of us have known it since it fell on evil days after the last war; and there is an endearing air of coffee, cream, waltz-music, and faded grandeur. That is latter-day Vienna. But in its prime the city was the capital of the stupidest tyranny west of St. Petersburg. It misgoverned Italy so long as anyone would let it; it misgoverned Bohemia and Bosnia, until the Czechs and Jugoslavs exploded in the revolution of 1918. The waltz-music was charming all the time. Schubert had been charming, too, in the days when Metternich directed from Vienna the worst tyranny in Europe. But the nations who lived under Austrian police had little heart for waltzing. Masaryk had a sharp eye for "Austrian slovenliness, superficiality, fop-

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perty". He watched the men who sent Europe over the edge of calamity in 1914—"dandies like this Count Berchtold . . . fine shoes, pressed trousers, immaculate ties and wonderfully confident about everything".

He was a Czech professor; and perhaps his ties were something less than wonderful. But there was a war on; and with Austria at war his country got its chance. How was it to take it? There was only one way; and Professor Masaryk, at sixty-four, became a revolutionary. That had never been his trade; most professors have other things to think about. But Masaryk was not quite an ordinary professor. He had fought the Austrians in politics; and when he took to revolution at the age of sixty-four, he made a job of it. He told somebody afterwards that he did not confide his plans to anyone. He just went off, saying that he meant to go away and fight for the Czech cause. He went to Switzerland and then to the Allied countries—France, England, Russia—and to the United States. He wrote articles and made speeches and argued for the necessity of Czechoslovak independence. The Austrian police, who were not clever, helped a good deal by imprisoning his daughter; and he learned the whole revolutionary apparatus of secret correspondence and underground communications with his own people in Prague. Professors are good learners sometimes; and Masaryk's adaptable intelligence gave form and reason to the floating notions of Czechoslovak nationality. He even found an army for the imprisoned state by the brilliant expedient of creating the Czechoslovak Legion out of the

ninety thousand men from Bohemia and Moravia, who had surrendered to the Russians rather than fight against them as Austrian conscripts. Small wonder that, when the Czechoslovak state was created, it elected Masaryk its first President.

The revolution of 1918, of which it was born, is in the direct line of the great revolutions, by which the process of human liberation sweeps steadily across the world. Once the world was bound, and authority presided without challenge over the mind and life of man. It was so under the Roman Empire. It was so in the centuries that followed, until authority was challenged. The first challenge came from England, when John Wycliffe stated his faith; the next from Bohemia, when John Huss took the torch from Wycliffe. Masaryk once talked about the pedigree of the world's revolutions—"We are all Hussites, said Luther." For the Reformation acknowledged its Czech ancestry; and the political revolutions that ensued were all children of the Reformation. Masaryk quoted a saying of Engels that "Luther and Cromwell had prepared the way for the French Revolution". For just as spiritual revolt began in England, so England made the first revolution in the field of modern politics. Europe was not quick to follow the example of the English Revolution. Indeed, America learned from the mother-country how to make revolutions before France joined the long procession. Then the march of freedom was fairly started. England had marched forward into the Commonwealth; the Thirteen Colonies had marched into the United States; France marched into the First Republic; and that

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spectacle helped New Spain and New Granada into the freedom of Latin America. As the Nineteenth Century went on, the march of freedom went with it. The Grecks were free; the Italians moved, with some help, towards freedom; and as the war of 1914 ended, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and Jugoslavs freed themselves from the dissolving incubus of the Hapsburg Empire. That process is not over yet. The march goes on. For whatever obstacles a backward tribe or a mad autocrat may raise, the human race does not march backwards.







### XIII

## R O O S E V E L T

WHEN we have a birthday in the family, there are three things that most well-regulated people do about it—eat a little too much; drink a little too much; and think hard about the nobler qualities of the hero of the occasion. I must not incite you in either of the first two directions, because there is a good deal of recent legislation on the subject. But the third form of celebration is not nearly so hard as it might seem, although Mr. Roosevelt is a successful, perhaps the most successful, politician of our time; and I have noticed that if a man wants his best side to be known to his contemporaries, he will do well to keep out of politics. Mr. Gladstone, who had the character of a Major Prophet, was frequently described in language that would have been unflattering to a card-sharper; and before Lincoln climbed on to his monument, things were said and written about him in his own country, which scarcely suggested that his birthday was likely to be celebrated as a national holiday. In democracies we are not unanimous about our public men. That is the glory of democracy. Most of them would hate it, if we were. Mr. Churchill is now the unchallenged leader of the British Empire. But his forty years of public life have hardly been an uneventful progress up an avenue of cheering extras. Quite the reverse. I do not know what he would have made of it if they had

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been. And the same is true of Franklin Roosevelt. A man does not become President of the United States or Prime Minister of Great Britain because his fellow-citizens are unanimous about him or about the things he cares for. What is called "general agreement" is mostly reserved for things that do not matter; and it is only the backward races that vote solid for somebody with a hand in the air and a gun in the back. In civilized communities he gets there, because enough of them agree with him to put him there and to outnumber those who think the opposite. That is free politics—the thing that we are fighting for—and Mr. Roosevelt has practised them as ably as any man now living. That was in peace time. But there is no such thing as politics in time of war. Then we line up behind our chosen leaders, and we keep our ranks the better because we *have* chosen them.

Franklin Roosevelt has been his nation's choice not once, but three times. It is not for an Englishman to tell the United States the reason why it made a man President, although I think that I can guess at some of them. When Mr. Roosevelt was elected at the end of 1932, the nation stood in need of something of which Britain stood in need, when it sent Mr. Churchill to Downing Street in May, 1940—leadership. Both peoples were at war. We were at war with the spreading stain of Germany across Europe; the United States in '32 and '33 were at war with the growing shadow of Depression across America. Both of us wanted leadership, and we got it. I remember that hectic week of his first Inaugural in March, 1933, because I happened to

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be in the United States with banks breaking all round me and just three hundred dollars of real money in my pocket; and I remember best of all the evening, because it happened to be my own birthday, when the new President assumed what was then a new duty to "convey to the people themselves a clear picture of the situation at Washington"; and then a radio announcer said, "The President of the United States", and a voice that we have all come to know so well began, "I want to talk for a few minutes with the people of the United States about banking. . . ."

The radio talk is surely, after the White House press conference, Franklin Roosevelt's great innovation in Presidential practice. Mr. Gladstone always said that, in any contest between the platform and the press, the platform would come out on top; and when you multiply the platform by the power of radio, when you enable every citizen with a receiving set to tune in to the White House, you have introduced a new and formidable force in politics, which will enable a man to be elected and re-elected President of the United States over the opposition of 85 per cent of the newspaper press. That force and the almost universal sense of America's dire necessity were the driving-power behind the policies of Mr. Roosevelt for the amelioration of his countrymen's condition. As to their merits opinion differed acutely, as it will always differ in free countries, especially when policies cost money and the tax-payer enjoys the privilege of paying for them.

That complex mass of social measures, designed

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to bring the economic structure of the United States up to date, composed the New Deal; and looking at it as an Englishman, I often felt that it was all very like the group of social reforms with which British politics were brightened thirty years ago in the great days of Mr. Lloyd George. In the 1930's Mr. Roosevelt seemed to be doing all sorts of things in the United States that Mr. Lloyd George had done over here about 1912. There seemed to be the same passion for the under-dog, though Mr. Roosevelt preferred to call him "the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid"; and there was certainly the same joy of battle. I often had a feeling that Mr. Roosevelt was a clean-shaven Lloyd George.

But there was one side of his work about which there was far less controversy. As the years after 1933 went by, an unpleasant shadow began to lengthen over Europe. Some of us could see it, and we made what noise we could to rouse our fellows. Mr. Churchill made more noise than anyone. But nobody paid very much attention. Without much concealment except the usual lies the Germans were preparing to stab their neighbours in the back. But no one in official Europe seemed to mind. The Nineteenth Century had been more sensitive about these things. When a scrubby little Italian tyrant maltreated his subjects ninety years ago, Gladstone thundered his denunciation of "the negation of God erected into a system of government". But when painstaking Germans elaborately tortured their fellow-citizens to death because they disliked the colour of their hair, no one in

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authority seemed to mind very much—except the President of the United States; and there were times when the more impatient among us, each time that we thought of our own appointed ministers, thanked heaven for the President of the United States. That was when the world began to look to Franklin Roosevelt. Not that he could move any faster or go any further than his duty to his own country would let him. But at least he seemed—unlike a good many other people in high office in the depressing years before the war—to see how very grave the issues were and, above all, to judge them by the simple test of right and wrong. If the world made one major error between 1935 and 1939, it lay in forgetting that the whole basis of international, as of national, society is sound morality, and that without a sense of right and wrong neither can endure. One thing we knew was that there was a high sense of right and wrong in the White House.

I remember crowding in there with the rest of the newspapermen one cold winter day in 1937. The President's press conference has always seemed to me the embodiment of practical democracy. It had been quite beyond the powers of Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Hoover. But Franklin Roosevelt appeared to revel in it. A hundred ordinary men and women, going twice a week to ask straight questions of the nation's head, was good for them and good for him; and in my time at Washington I learned to know the big desk with the Democratic donkeys, and the cigarette in the long holder, and the quick smile after a score, and the sudden seriousness of his look

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when he had something real to say. As I looked on, I began to understand how the leader of a great party became the leader of the nation. And when we talked after the conference was over, the President faced the realities of world affairs a good deal more directly than was customary among persons in authority in 1937. There was the same plain moral sense that has made him the spokesman of one hundred and thirty million plain Americans—the moral sense that Woodrow Wilson tried, without ultimate success, to apply to world affairs. I can never forget that Woodrow Wilson's chair stands in Franklin Roosevelt's study at Hyde Park. But in his life of teaching Wilson never learned how to carry millions of reluctant followers along with him; and eventually his moral precepts were tapped out on a lonely typewriter as unwanted admonitions in an unappreciative world. President Roosevelt, like all mortals, may make mistakes; but it will not be that one. A man cannot administer New York State as a reforming Governor and then steer the nation through the rocks and shoals of the Depression without mastering the supreme art of democracy—the art of popular leadership. Lincoln had it; Gladstone had it; Lloyd George had it; Franklin Roosevelt has it. It is not much use to the world at large having right principles and then dying for them with a brave minority. If we are to move forward, we must march by millions; and the men who can move millions are the right trustees to choose for great causes.

That is the President's dual equipment; he has taken the side of right, and he is able to move mil-

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lions into action for it. I suspect that his immense mastery of his fellow-men is due in no small measure to his astounding mastery of himself, to that amazing triumph over physical disablement which is the greatest victory that he, or any other man, can ever hope to win. When he was a young man, he was just a young man of good family and no particular promise. But at sixty he has trodden weakness underfoot; he has gone far in the reorganization of a great free community, reconstructing it with its own consent and bearing a supreme responsibility in its administration through longer and more eventful years than any of its chosen leaders. With that record and that equipment he faced the challenge of callous, calculated evil in the world outside America. In primitive communities such things are dealt with by determined men as Vigilantes and a hanging party. In organized society they are handled by the law—a District Attorney and the electric chair. But in world affairs they call for execution by the will of free peoples guided by the judgment and the voices of their chosen leaders. It is as the trusted leader of his people, the head of their armed forces, and the director of their vast productive power that we greet Franklin Roosevelt to-day.





## XIV

### CHURCHILL

WE are not good at anniversaries in England. When I come to think of it, almost the only one large numbers of us manage to remember without a conscious effort refers to an over-zealous gentleman named Guy Fawkes, who carried the national weakness for grumbling at the Government a little too far by placing large quantities of gunpowder under the House of Commons. He may have meant well. But he always strikes me as a bit of a Fifth Columnist. And, anyway, the occasion seems hardly worthy to supply us with our leading, if not our only, anniversary.

I always feel our deficiencies in this respect, when I start to wander about any Latin town in Europe or America and find that half the streets and all the squares are named after the Third of January or the Fourteenth of October or some other glorious date in the nation's history. The only date that any Englishman ever remembers is Quarter Day, when he has to pay his rent. But when I fail to cash a cheque somewhere in the United States because it happens to be Lincoln's Birthday or George Washington's, and all business has been stopped in honour of the occasion, I begin to wonder whether that is really the best way to glorify our great men. I mean, nobody did nearly so much about it while they were alive. Both of them had to fight every inch of the way against the opposition of some of

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their own supporters in order to make their historic contribution to the nation's growth; and, on the whole, it seems to me that the right time to honour a man's birthday is when you hope, in all sincerity and for the public interest, that he may be going to have a great many more.

That is the way with an anniversary that falls on November 30—Mr. Winston Churchill's birthday. I suppose that no man laid, or will ever lay, his country under a deeper obligation than the man who took office as Prime Minister on the very day the Germans broke into Western Europe and who helped to steady the British peoples through the anxious summer weeks of 1940, when they stood utterly alone. If they had gone down, a great deal more than England would have gone down with them. Freedom and decency, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness throughout the world hung in the balance, as the slight barrier of Britain stood in the path of a barbarian invasion which had swept Western Europe in a month. Things are very different to-day, with Britain armed again and the three greatest human units in the world—the British Empire, the United States, and the Soviet Union—linked in a common purpose to put Germany back where it belongs. But I wonder whether things would have been so different without one man to say what Englishmen were thinking, and to do what Britain wanted done, in the hot summer weeks of 1940. I doubt it. That is why the anniversary I mentioned is of interest to a good many million people outside Great Britain and the British Empire.

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All public men are remembered as they were at one particular moment of their lives. They may have spent long years in getting to that moment and long years after it. But history will always think of Wellington as a level-headed man of forty-six on a wet Sunday morning in June, 1815, and on horseback, and on the ridge of Waterloo; and of Lincoln in the instant of straightening himself up to deliver the Gettysburg Address; and of Gladstone as a fierce old man—half Major Prophet and half force of nature—pleading the cause of Ireland when he was over eighty. He was not always eighty. He had been in public life for nearly sixty years and pleaded a great many other causes. But that is how he is remembered, as we shall always remember Mr. Churchill for the sound of his voice speaking to his countrymen in that summer of 1940, when Great Britain stood in greater peril than at any moment in its history, knew it, and (thanks, perhaps, to Mr. Churchill) rather liked it.

His training to perform that supreme service had been a long business. He started as a cavalry subaltern. So, incidentally, did Chatham: it seems to be a good beginning. As there was not enough for subalterns to do, he turned himself into a war correspondent in order to see active service on the North-West Frontier. Then he made what he saw there into a book; and its success showed him that there might be a good deal more for him to do in life than drill Hussars and play regimental polo. But life in the 4th Hussars had given him a sight of India. After that he went with the 21st Lancers to the Sudan and tasted the doubtful pleasure of riding

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in a cavalry charge. There are not many men in public life who have ridden in a charge of cavalry. We used to hear a lot from Mussolini and Hitler about their military careers. But Mr. Churchill does not seem to talk about his quite so much; but then Mr. Churchill really was a soldier.

After the Sudan he went on to South Africa and touched another corner of the military career by finding out what it is like to be a prisoner of war. He was not one for very long, because he preferred to escape. But he brought away with him a life-long sympathy with imprisoned persons, which he applied to some purpose as a prison reformer when he was Home Secretary. People sometimes say that politicians will do anything for votes. But there are not many votes in prison reform. You lose the warders', and the convicts have not got any; and when Mr. Churchill found his feet in politics, he was less influenced in favour of what might be popular than of what he thought was right. It was not particularly popular to fight hard for naval appropriations before the last war, to scrape for expenditure on the first development of the Naval Air Service, to get going in the teeth of departmental sceptics something which actually grew into the first tank that we ever had. But Mr. Churchill did all those things because he happened to believe in them—and he was right.

It was not particularly popular to warn the sleeping world of the Democracies before the present war of the uncomfortable fact that there might be trouble coming. There are shorter cuts to popularity than the enunciation of unpleasant truths;

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and nobody loves the bringer of bad news. But Mr. Churchill has never looked for short cuts to popularity. Indeed, the chief thing about him has always been a dangerous aptitude for saying what he thought, regardless of the consequences. (He got that from his father; but as his mother was an American, he may have got it from her too.) That healthy practice is probably the reason why he has spent a fair proportion of his public life as a lone wolf in politics. He is the chosen leader of a great party now. But he has often had to play a lone hand outside the obedient ranks of any party; and as the glory of democracy is the Independent rather than the good party man, he looks like the right man to defend it.

And he seems to be the man to do it. He was trained to war. The greater part of his official life was spent in the study of war problems—at the Admiralty before and during the last war, and for the first eight months of this one; at the Ministry of Munitions in 1917 and 1918, when our production reached the volume which bore the Germans down; and at the War Office for two years after the last war. Nearly all his writings deal with military subjects. Admiral Lord Fisher, even when he disagreed with him, called Mr. Churchill a "War Man" and testified that his "audacity, courage, and imagination specially fitted him to be a War Minister". We knew all that about him. But what came as rather a surprise to some people was his ability to transmit his courage to others. No one ever doubted his. There was the apocryphal story of the cautious general who came to Colonel

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Churchill's headquarters in France, when he was commanding a battalion in the Line in 1916, and pointed out that it was in "a very dangerous place". "Yes, sir," said Colonel Churchill, "but, after all, this is a very dangerous war." He used to fly across to France, when he was Minister of Munitions; and once the engine failed over the Channel. He began to wonder how long they would be able to keep afloat, and he felt what he described to someone as a "curious calm". They asked him afterwards if he had been afraid of dying. "No," he said, "I love life, but I don't fear death." That is a leader for a nation at war.

He has the nerve; he has the knowledge; he knows what it is all about. He has seen the world of which the future hangs in the balance. America, Africa, and Asia have all seen something of Mr. Churchill in their time. When he was at the Admiralty, he cruised incessantly to see things for himself. He always likes to see things for himself; and that is just as well, because the curse of modern times is the untravelled politician. Just how much of the world has Hitler ever seen? Precisely nothing outside his country, a muddy trench or two in France in the last war, some streets in Italy lined with Mussolini's plain-clothes men, and the back areas of German armies. That is not a foundation on which you can rebuild the world; and half his contemporaries are not much better. Next time a man begins to tell you how he would reorganize the world, after the war, ask him if he has ever been there. Mr. Churchill has.

One sometimes forgets his immense official ex-

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perience. He has been Home Secretary; he has been President of the Board of Trade; he has been Secretary for the Colonies and Dominions. But, above all, he has moved freely up and down the world for the best part of two generations. When he was a child, he knew that the United States was not a large pink surface on a map, but the place his mother came from. He was in New York on his way to see the war in Cuba before he was twenty-one; he was lecturing there with Mark Twain as his introducer before he was thirty. He learned something of the East in India and Egypt. The war in South Africa taught him to respect the South African burghers. The first free constitutions of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies were introduced in the House of Commons by a young Under-Secretary named Churchill; and when Louis Botha came to London, the General reminded him that they had been "out in all weathers". One rainy afternoon, indeed, they had not been very far from shooting one another in Natal.

Experience of peace and war, experience of men and nations—that has been Mr. Churchill's training for leadership. But his main quality is something nobody can teach, the quality that made a Spaniard not so long ago, when speaking of him and remembering the bull-ring, say "*Qué toro*"—"what a bull for a fight".